

C H R I S T I A N

D I R E C T I O N S

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I N S T R U C T I O N S

F O R

N E G R O E S.

L O N D O N :

PRINTED FOR J. F. AND C. RIVINGTON,
N^o 62, ST. PAUL'S CHURCH-YARD.

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A D D R E S S

TO THE

N E G R O E S.

MY good Friend, you are desired to read this little book with great care and attention. You may read the first Instruction on Sunday, to as many Negroes as will sit down with you to hear you. And do you and they think upon it every day in the week, and talk to each other about it. The better you grow yourself, and the more Negroes you teach their duty to God, the more happy you will be when you die. The next Sunday read the second Instruction, and when you come to the end of the book, you must begin it again, and so go on to your dying day, to read, or hear it read. And when you shall begin to be pleased with knowing your duty to God, you will be pleased with praying to him, and with saying the prayers at the end of this book; and you will get them by heart as soon as you can. Begin with the Morning Prayer, and if you should be called out before the day breaks, and you

have no light in your cabin or room, you may say it to yourself as you walk along the path, and when you are at your work. You may say prayers in the night, for God sees you in the dark, and will hear you. Next to reading and praying, you should take delight to sing good and religious songs, and none but such. You will, as soon as you can, get by heart the songs at the end of this book. Begin with the Morning Song, and get one verse, and more if you can, every week, and sing them at your work and at home, to any tune, if it be grave, and if you try to please God for the good of your soul. If you go on in this way, your task will be easy, the day you will think short, and your mind will be cheerful. The great God who made you, will be your friend, the Lord Jesus Christ, who redeemed you, will love you, and send the holy and good Spirit to protect you from the devil and all evil spirits, and to bring you out of all temptations to sin; and when you die, the Lord Jesus will receive your soul, and bring it before God, where you will be happy for ever; which that you may, is the daily prayer of him who sends you this book.

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CHRISTIAN
DIRECTIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS
FOR
NEGROES.

INSTRUCTION I.

NEGRO.

WHY are you so earnest in persuading me to become a christian? Minister. Because I know for certain, that it is the only sure way to keep you from misery, and to make you happy both here and hereafter.

Neg. I will be very thankful, if you will be so kind as to explain to me what you say concerns me so very much.

A 3

Min.

Min. That I will most freely do: for my heart's desire is, that all persons may have the same knowledge of God, and his will, as we christians have; and besides by teaching you, I myself shall be a very great gainer.

Neg. I do not understand what you mean by that.

Min. I will tell you then: The great God, whom we christians worship, He who made the world and all things in it, and in whose hands our breath and life is, and who would have all his people to be happy, He has promised a very great reward to all such as shall strive to make him, and his glorious perfections, and his most gracious purposes, known unto men, especially to such unhappy people as you poor Negroes, who know not for what end you were made, and sent into this world, who know not what duties you owe to your Maker, nor on what conditions he will keep you from misery, and make you for ever happy when you die.

Neg. Be pleas'd then to tell me what you know more than we do, concerning the God you worship; for we know and believe, that there must be some great power above us, who made us, and does govern all things here below.

Min.

Min. But we christians know much more of that great power above, than you, in your present state of ignorance can do. We were indeed once as ignorant of him, (and of our most unhappy condition on that account) as you now are; but he has been so good as to make himself and his will known to us, to our very great comfort and happiness; and we cannot but desire that every one may be as happy as all true christians are in knowing their Maker's will, and honouring him, as good people ought to do.

Neg. May I ask you one thing?—Why did not that good Being, whom you call your God, make all this known to us as well as to you?

Min. I must tell you once for all, that we poor creatures ought not to expect, that the great God should give us an account of every thing he has thought fit to do. It is enough for us to know for certain, that he is good and just in every thing he does, or permits to be done.—And be assured, that, sooner or later, every tongue shall confess, and every soul say, that God is just and good in all he does.—At present it concerns you much more to know what we christians believe of God and his will, according to the account which he himself hath given us.

Neg. This, Sir, is what I now beg you to tell me.

Min. That I will most gladly do; for to know and believe in God is the foundation of all true religion, and of the happiness of men.

First then, We know the God we serve to be the most perfect of all Beings; and that there is no other God beside to be feared, loved, or worshipped.

That it is he who made the world; and that he preserves, and governs, and orders all things by his great wisdom and power.

That amongst other creatures he made man to be partaker of his happiness; in order to which, he gave him reason, that he might understand, and adore, and obey his Maker.

And that men might know him well, and love and fear him as they ought, he has given an account of his government of the world ever since he made it.—By which account it appears,—That he is Almighty,—and is able to do whatever he thinks fit:—That he is very wise, and good, and just; and can command nothing but what is for our advantage; and will most surely reward good men and women, and punish the wicked. We also know, that he is a most holy Being, and has ever been displeased with bad men.

He

Dial. I. FOR THE NEGROES. 9

He is also most kind to those, who, having offended him, are truly sorry for it, and return to their duty:—He sees and knows all the actions of men, whether good or bad; and even our very thoughts are known to him:—He not only knows things past and present, but even all things which shall ever happen hereafter:—And he is most faithful to his word, so that whatever he has promised he will most surely make good; and whatever he has threatened, he will as surely execute.

Neg. I think this account of the great and good God seems most agreeable to reason; now you have put me upon considering it.

Min. But there are other very great truths which God has also in that account made known to us, and which our reason could never have clearly discovered; such as these that follow:—That there will be another life after this;—and that the true happiness or misery of men will not be fully known till after they are dead.

Neg. Till after they are dead, Sir!—Why, do you christians know what shall become of men after they are dead?

Min. Yes we do, and that most certainly.—We know that this short life is only a life or state of trial, in order to mend our corrupt nature, that we may be

fit for a much better world when we die; and be for ever happy there, if we behave ourselves as we should do, while we live here.—For God has made known to us, That after death the souls of all good people go to a place of rest, and peace, and happiness;—and the souls of wicked people to a place of sorrow and misery, there to remain till the end of this world, and the day of judgment.

Neg. Pray, what do you mean by the end of the world, and by the day of judgment?

Min. Why, God has told us, that this world shall have an end;—that then there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust, both of good and bad men; that all who have ever lived shall then be raised to life, and give an account for whatever they have done in this world, whether good or evil:—And that such as have done good shall be made happy for ever;—and such as have done evil, that is, have led wicked lives, and have not repented in due time, shall be for ever miserable.

Neg. These indeed are truths which we know nothing of; and if they be really true, it certainly concerns me, and every man living, to think of them in good earnest, and to order his life accordingly.

—But

Dial. I. FOR THE NEGROES. II

—But let me ask you,—Do all you christians know these things, and believe them to be true?

Min. It is at the peril of their souls if they do not.—But I know why you ask that question, and I promise to answer and satisfy you upon that head hereafter.

—In the mean time, it is your best and wisest way to take care of yourself, in an affair of the highest importance to you; and not to neglect this opportunity, which God of his mercy and goodness gives you by me, of coming to the knowledge of your Maker, and of the duties you owe to him, to yourself, and to all others, lest they should be hereafter for ever hid from you, to your eternal ruin and destruction.

Neg. I hope I shall take your good advice. But in the mean time will you give me leave to ask you,—How did God make these things known unto you christians?

Min. That you shall know in due time; for you cannot know all things at once.—And these few truths only I have told you, at this time, that you may know and consider what you have to do;—that you may in good earnest desire to be further taught, and told how you may be for ever happy, (if it is not your own fault) and how you may avoid the danger and misery which you and all men are exposed to, who are

not very seriously concerned for their own safety.—For once and again I must tell you, as certain as there is a God, that you and every man living shall be happy or miserable when they die. We therefore (knowing these things,—and that we must all appear before the judgment-seat of God, and receive a sentence according to what we have done in the body, whether it be good or bad): We knowing these things, endeavour to persuade men to be afraid for themselves, and to live here so as to escape being miserable hereafter.

What therefore I would recommend to you at present, (for I would not overburden your memory at once) is this,—That you would pray to God to give you an heart disposed to hearken to the truth: for he has promised to enlighten the understanding, and open the hearts, of those who humbly and devoutly pray to him for his direction and assistance.

Neg. I hope I shall follow your advice; and I believe I shall hardly forget the things you have told me.

Min. Farewel for the present; and may God keep you in this good disposition, and give you a teachable temper!

INSTRUCTION II.

Of the Corruption of our Nature.

N E G R O.

I AM come again, kind Sir, for your further instruction. Your last words have made me very thoughtful and uneasy, when you told me with so much earnestness,—That happiness or misery will be the certain portion of every one after death.

Min. I told you nothing but the truth; and I am not sorry for your uneasiness;—since that may prove the greatest blessing of your life.

Neg. I do not understand how that can be.

Min. But this you can easily understand,—That they who are whole, and think themselves in no danger, will not look out for help; but they that are sick will be glad of advice, and will be apt to follow it;—when once you think that you are an ignorant, helpless, sinful creature, incapable of either knowing or doing the will of your Maker, or of reconciling yourself

yourself to him, whenever you have offended him.

Besides, I must tell you another truth,—That the more you are afraid for yourself, the more will the great God be disposed to pity you, and to deliver you from the danger you are justly afraid of; and to enable you to attain the end for which you were made, and sent into the world.

Neg. Will you be pleased to let me know why God made us, and sent us into the world?

Min. God made man, that he might have a creature upon earth endued with reason, and capable of adoring his Maker, and of imitating his perfections; and fit to partake of his bounty and happiness.

Neg. Pray what is the happiness you speak of?

Min. It is the happiness of going to a place of perfect knowledge, goodness, love, joy, and peace, which is to last for ever.

As nothing is more desirable than life, nothing should more forcibly work upon human nature, than the hopes of everlasting life.

Which life God himself has set forth to us by all such things as we are most commonly affected with:—As a crown,—a kingdom,—a treasure, an inheritance undefiled,

undefiled, that fadeth not away ;—and a—state of everlasting joy and pleasure.

Neg. If God designed men for this happiness, how came they to forfeit their title to it ?

Min. They do it by being guilty of sin ; that is,—by breaking the law which God has given them.

Neg. Has God given us any law ?

Min. Yes, surely.—He has given you and all men reason, which is instead of a written law or rule, by which you ought to live, and may, in some measure, know what is good, and what is evil ;—what will please, and what will displease, an holy, just, and good God.

Neg. But it is too plain, that people do not always observe this rule or law.

Min. It is so, and that is their sin, by which they displease God, and debar themselves of his greater favours, and are in danger of being miserable, even beyond what they can imagine.

Neg. But is not this the case of many christians, as well as of us ?

Min. It is surely so,—and they must suffer severely for it ; God having given them plainer rules, and greater helps, to overcome and cure that corruption of nature, which is one great occasion of all the wickedness which we see in the world.

Neg.

Neg. Pray what do you mean by the corruption of our nature?

Min. That I will tell you;—and what your own reason and experience must acknowledge to be true.—By the corruption of nature we mean, a strong inclination to evil, which we not only see and blame in other people, but very sensibly feel in ourselves; that is,—something within us, which opposeth our reason (and the other laws which God has given us); so that we are often tempted and prevailed upon, to do what our own judgment condemns us for, at the time of doing it.

Neg. This indeed is too plainly the case.—Men follow not their reason, but their passions, their inclinations, and their own perverse wills; and which too often they have cause to repent of.

Min. You cannot but have observed,—that this inclination to evil is often so violent, that men commit all iniquity with greediness; and this is the occasion of all the wickedness which we see and hear of;—all the cruelty, the oppression, the pride, the injustice, the malice, the covetousness, the lewdness, the impurity, murders, drunkenness, by which men dishonour their Maker and themselves, and are a plague to others; insomuch that it is found necessary to have severe laws made,

even

even by men, to hinder wicked people from hurting one another;—of which laws there would be no occasion, if reason had been sufficient to govern men; which sad experience shews it is not;—there being too many, whom no reason, no advice, no prospect of danger, no hopes of happiness, can keep from ruining themselves and others.

Neg. I confess there is truth in what you say.—But sure this is not the case of all people.

Min. I must tell you,—that the wickedness of others shews us plainly what all men are by nature.—All men have the seeds of evil within themselves, which would spring up and appear upon every temptation, if not hindered by something more than their own reason; and they that are not so wicked as others, may be thankful to a power above, who restrains them.—And your own heart and experience must tell you, that such as are not so wicked as these we have been speaking of, are forced to strive hard against the temptations they meet with, before they can follow what their reason tells them they ought to do or avoid;—that they are but too often unwilling to follow the light or reason which God has given them; and too—too often make use of it only to hurt or

over-

over-reach one another.—All which shews, that our nature is strangely corrupt;—so that no man can say he is free from sin, or not guilty before God.

Neg. I must confess, indeed, there is truth in every thing you have told me.

Min. Well then, let this truth sink deep into your heart; for, without the firm belief of this, you will never have any true notion of the goodness, justice, or mercy of God to men; nor will you ever know the value of christianity.

Neg. But how man, the creature of so holy and good a God, should come to have a nature so corrupt and disordered, and prone to evil,—This, indeed, surprises me.

Min. Far be it from any man to imagine, that a good and holy God, who hateth sin, should be the cause of this corruption of our nature, and of the evil it occasions! —No,—He made man at first upright, holy, just and good, and capable of doing every thing that became a reasonable creature; but how he fell into this wretched and distempered condition, you shall know in due time.

Neg. But since sin and wickedness are displeasing to God, why does he suffer sin and sinners to be in the world?

Min.

Min. You do not consider, that all men being sinners, God must either suffer sin to be in the world, or destroy all the men, women, and children upon the face of the earth.—But when you come to know the christian religion, and what God has done to cure this great disorder of our nature, you will find, that God can take occasion from the sins of men to shew the greatness of his mercy and compassion for sinners; —and you will have reason to admire and adore his wonderful wisdom, and mercy, and goodness, to all such as shall lay hold on his offers of grace,—as well as dread his just anger against such as despise his mercy.

And this is one reason, that I have taken so much pains to convince you of the corruption of our nature, and of the danger we are in on this account, that you may have no ease in your mind, until you know how to be delivered from so sad a bondage, and the fears which ought to attend it.

There is another danger, which we are all exposed to, and which you ought to know;—and that is, the power and malice of evil spirits.

Neg. What do you mean by evil spirits?

Min.

Min. God has made known to us, that there are creatures, both good and bad, which we call angels or spirits, and which are ever about us, though we do not see them, they having no bodies, as we have.

—The good spirits are appointed by God, to take care of his servants;—and the evil spirits are such as have rebelled against their Maker, and having utterly lost his favour, strive to tempt men to all manner of wickedness, that they may be as miserable as themselves.—And through their temptations the wickedness of the world was grown so great,—that God was provoked at one time to drown all the people of the earth, except one good man and his household;—and at another time, to destroy several great towns with fire from heaven, for the wickedness of them that dwelt in them.

Neg. These, indeed, are reasonable proofs of the power which evil spirits may have over wicked men, and of the great danger we are in of being ruined by it.

Min. But it is necessary, that you should know these things; for whoever is not a worshipper of the only true God, whom christians serve, is a slave to these evil spirits, and too often is a worshipper of them, though he does not know it.—When you consider these things, you will have

have reason to be concerned and afraid for yourself.

Neg. And so indeed I shall be, if this is our case.

Min. This is, in truth, the case of every one who is ignorant of the true God, and of the way which he has revealed to save his unhappy creatures from ruining themselves, and losing that happiness which he has provided for such as love and obey him.

Neg. I do most earnestly intreat you, that at your leisure you would give me an account of the christian religion, which you say is the way that God has revealed to save all men from ruin.

Min. That I will do, through the favour of God, the next time we meet: In the mean while remember—what I assure you of,—that this life is the time, in which you are to chuse whether you will be happy or miserable for ever; and that your happiness or misery will depend upon your embracing or rejecting the offer now made you, by the great God, of becoming a christian. You ought therefore to pray to the great God, to enable you to lay hold of this opportunity of being happy. And I will not forget to pray for you, that God would enlighten your mind with saving truth.

INSTRUC-

I N S T R U C T I O N III.

The Proofs of the Christian Religion.

N E G R O.

I AM come again, Sir, to trouble you sooner, I believe, than you expected.—You said, that it was good for me that I was in fear for myself; I cannot chuse but be so, since you told me, That my happiness or misery will depend upon my embracing or rejecting the offer now made me of becoming a christian.—I own I am not satisfied with my present condition;—I am convinced by my reason, as well as by what you told me, that we were made to be an honour to the Being that made us, by living according to that light and reason which he hath given us.—For my own part, I fear I have not done so; and if he shall be displeased with me, I know not how to help myself, or make my mind easy.

Min. Assure yourself, this is the case of every thoughtful person, who has no knowledge of christianity.—And therefore our great and good Creator, in compassion to those unhappy men and women, who

labour under such doubts and fears, has graciously pointed out the way by which they may be freed from them,—and that is, by embracing the christian religion.

Neg. What does the christian religion propose to us, to cure us of those fears?

Min. I will first tell you in short, and afterwards explain myself more fully.—In the first place,—It will lead you to know the true God, the maker of the world, and convince you of his great love for his unhappy creatures, and of his earnest endeavours to keep them from ruining themselves.—It shews us also how we must answer the end for which God made us, and sent us into the world.—It sets before us the dangers we are liable to, and teaches us the way to escape them.—It makes known to us those laws by which God will judge the world, that men may order their lives accordingly.—It gives us rules to make us happy when we die, and promises all necessary assistance to observe those rules.—It directs us how we may be restored to the favour of God, whenever we shall have been so unhappy as to have offended him by our sins, which we are but too apt to do.—It assures us, That God is a bountiful rewarder of all such as seek to please him.

Neg.

Neg. This is, Sir, a most desirable account you have given me of the christian religion.—Will you be pleased, as you promised, to explain these things more fully?

Min. You must know then, that we are called christians, from professing ourselves to be the disciples and followers of a most holy and divine person, Jesus Christ, who was sent by him from heaven, to make his will and gracious purposes known unto men.

In order to this, he being a pure spirit, it was necessary, that he should take a body like one of ours, that people might see him, and talk with him.—He therefore submitted to be born of a woman, and he took the soul and body of a man, and in that nature he lived among men, and made known to them the things which I have already told you.—Particularly, he gave them a clear knowledge of their Maker; and by his most perfect, innocent, and holy life, what a good creature man was, when he was first made, before he fell into sin, and became prone to evil, as he now is.

He told them, that he came as a peacemaker betwixt God and his rebellious creatures, who by their disobedience had lost

lost his favour, and the happiness he had prepared for them.

And in order to reconcile them to God, and to the duty and obedience which they owed to him, he said these words to them:—That all such as became sensible of their faults and misery, and were willing to give themselves up to the Son of God as their Lord and Saviour, should through his merits and mediation receive a full and free pardon for all their past offences, be restored again to his favour, and obtain that happiness which they had lost by their offences.

Neg. These are indeed wonderful proofs of the great goodness of God.

Min. But then you are to know, that all such as despise this surprising goodness of God, are not only to be deprived of his favour, but are to be punished with torments great beyond all we can now imagine. For you must never forget what I told you before, and what Jesus Christ has assured us of, That this short life is only a passage to another, which is to last for ever; and where every man is to be rewarded or punished according to his behaviour in this world.

Neg. I have not forgot that.—But give me leave, Sir, to ask you one question:—How are you christians sure,—that this

great person was the Son of God, and came from him to tell us these things?

Min. It is necessary, that every one who intends to be a christian, should have the greatest assurance of it; for on this truth the christian religion is founded.

You must know then, that this divine person, in order to give men all possible assurance, that he was what he declared himself to be, performed before their eyes such wonderful works, as shewed that in him dwelt all the fulness of the godhead bodily.—For example,—he healed all manner of sickness and diseases with the word of his mouth.—He gave sight to such as were born blind.—To such as were dumb and deaf, he gave the power of speech and hearing;—and he made the lame to walk. He fed and satisfied the hunger of many thousands of people more than once, with a few loaves and small fishes, which they saw multiplied before their eyes, so that thousands were at once eye-witnesses of this miracle.—He commanded the winds, the storms, and the seas, and they obeyed his word. He raised to life those that had for some time been dead.—He convinced those with whom he conversed, that he knew the very thoughts of their hearts, which none but God can do. Lastly,—the great God him

self did more than once, by a voice from heaven, declare, That he was his beloved Son; and commanded, that as such he should be heard and obeyed.

Neg. Indeed these are most sure proofs, that this divine person was what he said he was; and that whatever he taught must be true.

Min. But I have other things to tell you, in order to confirm your faith or belief in this divine person, and his message. Amongst many other things, which he foretold his followers, this strange thing was one;—that notwithstanding the wonderful works which he had done before their eyes, his enemies would put him to death; but that within three days he would rise again to life. Accordingly, after they had treated him with all the evil usage that spite and malice could invent, they did most barbarously murder and crucify him. And after three days he rose again from the dead, and talked with his disciples and followers, with not less than five hundred at one time, many of whom lived very long after, and bore witness of his resurrection, and were put to death for it.

Neg. I cannot forbear asking you, Why did God suffer those wicked men to murder one sent by himself? And I should also be glad to know some more things

relating to so divine, holy, and wonderful a person.

Min. That you shall know hereafter. In the mean time, I must proceed to tell you, that after having conversed with his disciples many weeks, and in the sight of many of them, he ascended into heaven. But before his departure from them, he promised them, that he and his Father would send another divine person, (not in the form or fashion of a man) but as a pure spirit, to dwell in them, to guide and comfort, to inspire them with all truths necessary to be known by them, and to enable them, for the confirmation of such truths to others, to do all such mighty works as he had done among them: according to which promise, ten days after he went up to heaven, that divine Spirit came down upon them after a most wonderful manner, and enabled them to understand and speak all the languages of the then known world, to which they went in order to carry those good tidings, whereby we, and many other nations were brought out of error, ignorance, and darkness, into the clear light and true knowledge of God, and of his son Jesus Christ, and of that holy Spirit, which enabled them to preach this joyful doctrine to all the world:—That Christ has made

our peace with God, if we submit to be governed by him, and by his laws, and put our trust in him.

Neg. Well, Sir, you have given some ease to my mind.—I believe, that what this holy person said must be certainly true; and I suppose all that know these things, are christians.

Min. Indeed they are not; and you will not wonder at it, when you consider what it is that hinders people from being christians.—There are many who never think of their Maker, or what must become of them when they die.—Many indeed hear these things, but their affections are so set upon this world, its pleasures and profits, that they do not lay them seriously to heart.—And too many are so fond of their own bad ways, to which they have been long accustomed, that they see not the truth of what is proposed to them.—Besides all this,—the apostles taught many things, which wicked people would not hear with patience: for example, — that murderers, drunkards, adulterers, oppressors, covetous persons, the proud, malicious, and revengeful people, all lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God,—that all such who were guilty of those things, must forsake them, in order to become christians.

Neg. Well, Sir, I am convinced that notwithstanding the proofs of the truth of the christian religion, there might be people who would not become christians.—But I should be very thankful, if you would let me know, how the christian religion did prevail at the time the apostles of Christ made it known to all nations?

Min. That you shall know, when you come again to me.—In the mean while, forget not to beg of God to give you an heart always dispos'd to receive the truth.

INSTRUCTION IV.

The wonderful Success of the Gospel, when it was first preached to the World.

NEGRO.

WHEN I left you last, Sir, you promised to let me know what followed the descent or coming down of that holy Spirit upon Christ's Apostles; and how the christian religion was received in the world.

Min. You must know then, that when this happened, there were people out of all

all nations at Jerusalem, the city to which they were come to worship the great God. Now when all these heard the apostles of Christ (who before that time knew no language but their own) declaring the wonderful works of God, in the language of every nation then present, they were astonished; and being convinced, that such men must have been divinely inspired, they therefore gave heed to them, while they declared God's most gracious purposes—of mercy, pardon, and happiness, to all such as would obey the message he had sent to them by his Son; insomuch that no less than three thousand embraced the christian religion that very day, and five thousand more, immediately after; and these converts became so many witnesses of these wonderful things, to the several nations from whence they came thither to worship. After this, the Apostles went into all nations, making known this joyful message of God to men, that he would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth, or the christian faith; that he was ready to be reconciled to all such as had offended him; and that he would make them happy for ever, if they would be persuaded to forsake their evil ways, and be governed by such rules as Jesus Christ

had given them. So that in all nations all such persons as were truly concerned for themselves, and disposed to receive the truth, became christians; and very great was their number every where. And indeed Christ himself foretold it would be so; though at that time it seemed the most unlikely thing in the world, that all nations should receive a religion opposed by their rulers, upon the preaching of a few poor strangers, who had no worldly power, riches or learning, to induce people to believe and follow them; and who at the same time required all men to forsake the customs and religion of their forefathers, to restrain their appetites, and govern their passions, to leave their wicked ways of living, and to lead sober, honest, and good lives, and to suffer death, rather than deny the truths they told them: now does not the miraculous success they met with, in propagating such a religion, shew it to be the work of the great God?

Neg. Pray, Sir, what became of these apostles after this?

Min. As they had taught all others to suffer death, rather than deny the truths which they had received from God by Jesus Christ, so they themselves laid down their lives for those truths they had preached.

ed. But before they suffered, they appointed others to succeed them in publishing these truths to all nations; by which christianity has continued unto this day; and we are assured by Christ himself, will continue unto the world's end. And a very great change for the better has been made in all nations where it has been received.

Neg. You will oblige me, if you will let me know in what the world is become better by this religion?

Min. In the first place, they who then embraced the christian religion professed, that they were strangers in this world, and therefore looked upon this life only as a journey to a much better, which they expected after death. This made them content with any condition, which God should think fit to place them in. This kept them from being covetous, or overmuch concerned for the things of this world; which too often makes men unjust and wicked. They believed, that if they were poor, or in misery, God would make them ample amends in the next life, for what they had suffered in this. Their great rule given them by Christ was this, That they should deal with all others, as they themselves would desire to be dealt with. This made them very just in all

their actions, and careful not to wrong or oppress any person. Stealing, cheating, and lying, were not so much as known among them. Their religion obliged them to be at peace with all men as much as possible. So that quarrels, and wars, and murders, they utterly abhorred. On the contrary, they were kind and compassionate even to their enemies ; never returning evil for evil. They had always a tender compassion for such as were in want, or in misery ; clothing the naked, feeding the hungry, and lodging the stranger, according to their ability. As to themselves, they were very sober, not given to gluttony or drunkenness, which they knew God would be highly displeased with. They were chaste and modest, both men and women ; all kept strictly to their own wives and husbands as God had appointed, who had declared that no adulterer or whoremonger must hope for heaven or happiness. Lastly, they suffered all manner of torments, and even death itself, rather than they would renounce the religion which they had embraced, on a full conviction that it came from God.

Neg. Indeed, Sir, this is a most wonderful account of those who first professed the christian religion. One cannot surely imagine

imagine, that such good men should have any enemies.

Min. But indeed they had, and very many; for those evil spirits, which I told you of before, tempted all sorts of wicked people to destroy them, and their religion, if possible; and would certainly have done it, but that the great and all-powerful God hindered it, and caused, that the more it was persecuted, the more it increased. All such as had been brought up in any other religion, became their mortal enemies, especially such as worshipped idols, false Gods, or evil spirits, which the greatest part of the world then did, and too many do to this day. Besides these, men of wicked lives hated and persecuted those who professed the christian religion, because they declared, that God would most surely call them to an account, and adjudge them to a misery that would never end, if they did not forsake their sins, and lead better lives.

On these, and on many other accounts, christians where every where persecuted, and vast numbers were most barbarously murdered; which grievous sufferings they patiently endured, in a full assurance of a better life, which God, who cannot deceive them, had promised.

Neg. Pray, Sir, are christians still used after this cruel manner?

Min. No:—For in time the kings and princes of the world became christians and when they favoured and protected that religion, their subjects followed their example, though it was not always in order to save their souls, but for other unworthy and worldly ends.—And it was then, that many began to call themselves christians, who in their hearts and lives were far from being such:—By which christianity became extremely corrupted and men outwardly professed the christian religion, at the same time as they lived in those sins, which it forbids on pain of damnation.

Notwithstanding this, the christian religion, where it is truly professed, is still the same; and is the only method of restoring men to the favour of God, and bringing them to the happiness which we all wish to enjoy.

We have the same just and holy God to worship, that those first christians had; God who loveth the good and pious, and hateth the wicked; who will most surely call all men to an account, judge them according to their works, and reward or punish them as they have deserved.—So that every man, who has any concern for himself,

himself, and would escape the anger of an offended God, will not only be a christian in name, but in good earnest will live as a true christian ought.

Neg. I most heartily thank you, Sir, for this account you have given me of the christian religion.—Now one would hope, that if our people knew these things, they might be prevailed on to become christians as easily as those nations were, who first embraced christianity.

Min. We may wish and pray for this; —but there are some reasons, which you may know hereafter, that we fear may, for the present, hinder so general a conversion and blessing to your people; but a time will certainly come, when you will all know and worship the true God, the maker of heaven and earth, and his only Son, whom he has ordained to be the judge of the living and dead.—In the mean while, take you care for yourself, and beg of God, that you may not lose the favour which is offered you at this time by me, one of his unworthy servants.

Neg. I hope I shall do so, and shall not forget what you have said to me at this time.—And I believe I shall very soon wait on you again for your further instruction.

INSTRUCTION V.

An Account of the Fall of Man, and what followed thereupon, till the Coming of CHRIST.

NEGRO.

I AM now come to mention to you one difficulty, which I beg you would explain to me:—How man, the creature of an holy and good God, came to have such a strangely disordered nature, and so prone to evil, as we all by sad experience see and feel it to be.

Min. I am obliged to do so; for without the knowledge of this, you can have no true notions of the justice, and mercy, and goodness of God.

What therefore he has made known to us in the holy Scriptures, is:—That after he had made this world, and all things in it, in six days, and that he might have creatures capable of praising him for his wonderful works, he made one man and one woman, called Adam and Eve, determining to make of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth; all which are the offspring of

tha

that one man and woman.—He has also made known to us, that these two persons were at first made after the likeness of their Creator, being endued with reason, and other heavenly gifts.—We learn also, that these our first parents, being thus made perfect and good, and capable of living for ever, were placed in an happy state called Paradise, with a promise of life and happiness, as long as they continued obedient to their Maker's commands.—Now these two persons were in a state of trial, as we all are this day, though in a manner quite different from ours:—For they coming out of their Maker's hands perfect, that is, endued with clear and strong notions of their obligation to perform all the great duties of life, could not well be supposed to lie under any temptation of violating that chief part of their duty.—It was therefore necessary, that some other act of obedience, suitable to the place and circumstances they were in, should be required of them, to prove what was in their hearts: and whether they would chuse, under the most tempting offers, to break an express commandment of God, their creator, preserver, and governor, or not; even though the reason of such a commandment was not made known unto them.—A command of this kind God was pleased

pleased to give them; at the same time enforcing their obedience to it, by threats of a most dreadful punishment, if they should ever transgress it.

How long our first parents continued in their duty, we are no where told; but at length, by yielding to the temptation of an evil spirit, and not regarding the command of their Maker, they did fall from that happy condition they were in; and, by that most grievous crime, (for so it appears by the punishment a most righteous God inflicted on them for it) they highly displeased God, who left them to themselves; and having lost their innocence, and that image of God in which they were created, their nature became sadly changed for the worse.—And the children which they afterwards begot, being born of sinful parents, became, even like their parents, disobedient, and prone to evil, as you see they are at this day: all which these first parents of mankind brought upon themselves and their posterity.

It was thus that sin, and evils of every kind, and death at last, entered into the world, as the just punishment of their disobedience to the commands of God;—by which all right to his free promise of eternal life and happiness was forfeited and lost.

Neg.

Neg. This is indeed a plain account how sin and wickedness entered into the world, and we ought to believe it to be a just account, since God has made it known to you.

Min. As to the corruption of our nature, and the sin that does so easily beset us, your own experience will convince you of the truth of it.—And no other account can be given how it came into the world.—And you will learn by what followed this act of disobedience, how displeasing to God it was, and the punishment it deserved.

Neg. Will you be so kind as to let me know what followed this sad calamity?

Min. You will easily conceive how miserable the condition of these our first parents was now become:—They knew that they had failed in their duty to their Maker;—their reason could not inform them how to help themselves;—the loss of their innocence, and of their Maker's favour,—their forfeiture of the happiness they had enjoyed,—with their dreadful apprehensions of that death which was threatened;—the sense of these things would most certainly have broke their hearts, had not the goodness of God immediately interposed to keep them from despair.—For though his perfect holiness could not but hate

hate the sin, yet his goodness inclined him to have compassion on the sinner; and from thence he took occasion to make known another of his most glorious perfections, his infinite mercy.

Neg. I am most desirous to hear how that was done.

Min. Why, as a remedy for what had been done amiss, and could not be undone, their Maker was pleased to enter into a new covenant with them;—so that neither they, nor any of their posterity, should, on account of their disobedience, be ruined, except it was purely their own fault.

Neg. That was indeed a most kind offer of their offended Maker: Pray, what was that covenant?

Min. It was this:—That on account of one, who would in due time satisfy his divine justice for their offence, (and take vengeance on that evil spirit, that had tempted them to disobey his command) he would restore them to his favour, upon certain conditions, and would appoint them means, by which they and their posterity might, upon their repentance, obtain his pardon, when they should do amiss, as since their fall they would be but too apt to do.

Neg. You will now be so kind as to tell me,

me know what followed this promise of God to his sinful creatures.

Mis. You must know then,—that some of their children and posterity, keeping up a sense of these things, and an expectation of this promise, lived in the fear of God.

—But many others of them, through the corruption of their nature, became exceeding wicked: one of their own sons murdered his brother; for which God, to keep others from committing such horrid crimes, banished him from his presence, and he spent his days in misery.

At last, wickedness increased so much, and became so general, that God was provoked to destroy the whole race of men by a flood, (except one man, whose name was Noah, together with his little family) as I told to you before.

By this good man, and his family, the whole earth was again filled with people, as it is this day.—And while his good instructions, and the memory of that dreadful judgment lasted, men lived in the fear of God;—but too soon fell into wickedness again:—And most of these, losing the knowledge of the true God, fell into idolatry, a sin which God principally abhors, as leading men into all other wickedness.

Neg.

Neg. Pray, what is that sin of idolatry, which God so hateth?

Min. It is the giving that honour and worship, which is only due to the true God, to his creatures, to the sun and moon, and to evil spirits,—and to the images representing these.

Notwithstanding this,—God never left himself without witness; but gave continual proofs of his hatred against wickedness, and of his favour and protection of good men in all ages, and amongst all nations, even to this day.—And thus it is,—that calamities of all kinds are brought upon earth; that one nation makes war upon another; these being only instruments in the hands of God, and by his wise and just appointment, for the punishment of their sins.

Neg. Pray, had any of these nations ever afterwards an opportunity of coming to the knowledge of the true God, and of the worship due to him?

Min. Yes, indeed they had. For the holy scriptures inform us, that—God made choice of a certain person, whose name was Abraham, and called him and his family from the midst of a nation given to idolatry;—that to this man he made himself, and his glorious perfections known; and for his encouragement to

on in his duty, he promised,—that from him in due time the Deliverer of the world from sin and death should proceed, and that in the mean while he would make his descendants a great and numerous people; all which was made good in a most wonderful manner. His posterity increased exceedingly; and wherever they travelled, they communicated the knowledge of the true God, and told men how he ought to be feared and worshipped; so that many nations might have known these things, had it not been their own fault;—for God caused them often to wander, that they might make him known amongst men, and cure them of their wickedness and idolatry.

It was in the time of that good man, that God shewed his hatred of wickedness, and his displeasure against great and bold sinners, after a manner the most frightful and astonishing.—There were several great cities, the chief of which were Sodom and Gomorrah, the inhabitants of which, through pride, fulness of bread, and much idleness, fell into all manner of wickedness; which provoked God to make them an example of his displeasure against such sins;—for he rained down fire and brimstone upon them, and utterly destroyed both them, their towns, and their whole land,

land, the dreadful marks of which are to be seen at this day.—At the same time, God, to shew his care for those that feared him, sent his angels, and delivered one good man, and his family, out of that fearful destruction.

After this, the children of Abraham, to whom the promise was made, multiplied greatly; to whose posterity God gave very good laws and directions, how they might live so as to please their Maker, and not hurt one another;—and did most wonderful things before their eyes, when he delivered them out of a most cruel bondage; to convince them, and all other nations, that should hear of these things, that the idols, and evil spirits, which they worshipped, were no Gods; and that there was no God, but the God of this people.

Neg. Pray, what were the laws and directions that God gave this people and nation?

Min. The chief of them were these that follow:—That they should neither have nor worship any other God but him who had done such wonders for them:—That they should not make any visible image of him:—That they should not profane his holy name:—That they should keep holy one day in seven, to preserve the remembrance of him, and his works:

—That they should love and honour their parents :—That they should love one another, as being all the creatures of a good God ;—and neither hate nor murder any one :—That they should not commit adultery, or be guilty of any lewdness :—That they should not steal, or lye, or swear, or bear false witness, or covet or set their hearts upon what was another man's.—And, remember what I tell you :—The substance of these laws was given soon after the flood to Noah and his family, from whom all the white and black people now alive did come.

Soon after God had given his people these laws, he settled them, after a most wonderful manner, and in a fruitful land, which he had long before promised to Abraham their great forefather, and blessed them very much, while they observed his laws.—But even these people, whom we now call Jews, through the corruption of nature, often transgressed his commands, and were as often punished, and upon their repentance pardoned ; till at last, they growing very wicked, he let their enemies destroy most of them, their towns, their land, and their place of worship ; and they are at this day dispersed over the face of the earth, without any sure settlement.

Now,

Now, a few years before this happened, the time was come, when the great God was pleased to send into the world that person or prophet, whom he had promised to our first parents, and who had engaged to make satisfaction to the divine justice, for their great offence.—But a particular account of this person and blessing, will take up more time, than, I believe, you have to spare: I shall therefore defer it till you come next to me.

I N S T R U C T I O N VI.

*JESUS CHRIST the Mediator and
Saviour of the World, and the Head
of all Christians.*

N E G R O.

YOU shewed me, Sir, when I waited on you last, how man came to fall from that happy condition in which he was created: and how he, and all his posterity, became subject to sin, to misery, and to death:—As also, how their Maker spared the lives of our first parents, although

although they had deserved immediate death, on account of one who had undertaken to satisfy the divine justice for their transgression, and for the offences of all their posterity, upon the most merciful conditions.—And I left you with a most earnest desire of knowing more of that sacred person, who was to come into the world for that end;—and, as you said to me, did come about that time, when God had, for their sins, cast off the Jews, whom he had so long, and so greatly, favoured and protected, above the nations of the world.

Min. I told you before, that that person knowing into what a sad condition those two unhappy persons had brought themselves, and their posterity, by their rebelling against their Maker;—how dreadfully sad their punishment would be, and what a very great happiness they would lose;—he, by God's most gracious appointment, undertook to satisfy the divine justice, by submitting to such sufferings as God was pleased to accept by way of atonement for the sins of men.

Neg. Pray, Sir, how did Jesus Christ do this?

Min. As I told you before, he, out of love to his otherwise lost creatures, took the body of a man from a pure virgin,

that he might be seen and talk with men, and in their nature be capable of suffering for the sins of men.

Now, in that body, in the first place, he let mankind know God's great goodness, and his readiness to forgive offenders, even the greatest offenders, upon their repentance, and return to their duty; as also, how they ought to live so as to please God.—And by his most wise and holy life, and doctrine, and example, he shewed what an excellent creature man was, before he lost his innocence, and fell into a state of sin,—as also, how hateful to God sin must be, since so divine a person, which, you will see hereafter, was the Son of the most high God, was obliged to come down from heaven, to satisfy God's justice, and to save men from the punishment they deserved.

After he had done this, enough to convince all well-disposed people, that he was the Son of God, and sent by him to declare his Father's will to men;—after this, that, as Son of God, he might make full satisfaction to the divine justice, he willingly laid down his own life, for his otherwise undone creatures.

Neg. I begin now to understand what before I did not, why God would suffer his own Son to be put to death by wicked men; and why his Son would chuse to be

so dealt with, when he could have hindered it: I suppose it was because he had undertaken the cause of sinners, and suffered death to make an atonement for them, and to satisfy the justice of his offended Father, who therefore suffered him to be put to death.

Min. You understand it right.—And the great God, to convince the world, that his justice was satisfied by the death of this most worthy person, raised him from the dead, the third day after he had been crucified and buried; by which he was, in the most convincing and powerful manner, declared to be the Son of God; of all which the Holy Scriptures give us a particular account,—and, for our comfort, declare,—that God had laid on him the iniquity of us all; that he tasted death for every man, that is, for every penitent sinner, from the first man that was made, to the last that shall be born into the world;—lastly, that he has saved us by his blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.

Neg. It seems then, that we also have an interest and right in the blessings which he has purchased by his death.

Min. Most certainly you have;—for so he hath said,—that the Gentiles, such as were strangers to the true God, should be

fellow-heirs with his chosen people, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ.

Neg. Pray, what is meant by the Gentiles being of the same body?

Min. The meaning is this:—That you should be of the same holy family with God's chosen people; and that as we are the creatures of one and the same God, and children of one and the same father,—and redeemed by the same Saviour, you should now be made members of the same body, or holy family, which is called the church of God, of which Jesus Christ is the head and governor.

Neg. I should be very thankful, if you would explain that to me.

Min. You must know then,—That after the Son of God had by his death made an atonement for the sins of mankind, he commanded his Apostles to offer the blessings he had purchased unto all the nations of the earth, in order to take out of them a people for the glory of God;—and to let all men know the merciful favours which the great God offered them by his Son, which were,—Repentance on men's part, and forgiveness of sins on the part of God; and that this should be preached in his name among all nations—And that all such as would receive him as their Redeemer

deemer and heavenly master, should be one family, called the church or body of Christ, because he is the head of this body, and governor of this family, which is made up of all true believers in all nations of the world; that as he had redeemed them, he might protect, and govern, and keep them in the way of life and happiness;—and lastly, that the great truths of christianity, and the holy Scriptures, in which they are contained, might be preserved, being to be constantly read among them.

Neg. But, good Sir,—how can people of so many distant nations, be one family?

Min. They are all of one family, as they all agree in one faith,—and profess to be governed by one law of Jesus Christ;—as they all engage to forsake the Devil, and all the ways of an evil world, and to worship the one and only true God;—as they all profess to receive the holy Scriptures to be the only rule of both their faith and manners;—as they all pray to one and the same God, in the name, and for the sake, of the same mediator and advocate;—as they are all received into the same family, by one and the same ordinance of baptism; and are under the direction and influence of the same Holy Spirit; and as they all hope to meet together in the kingdom of heaven.

Neg. I think I understand you very well.—I should be thankful therefore, if you would let me know what are the blessings of being a member of this family?

Min. The blessings are many and great,—such as these following:—You will be enabled to answer the end for which you were made and sent into the world.—If you enter into this family with a sincere purpose of living as a Christian ought to do, all your past sins will be forgiven you;—and, if you afterwards fall into sin, (as you will be but too apt to do) you will have Jesus Christ an advocate with his Father for your pardon, upon your repentance, and return to your duty. Beside this, you will be under the special care and protection of God;—you will have the Ministers of Christ to instruct you, and God's all-powerful Spirit to direct, support and comfort you in all your distresses.—You will have an interest in all the prayers and blessings of that family throughout the world; every member of that family being bound to seek the good of the whole body, to relieve the necessities of such as are in want, or in miseries, and to pray for each other.—Lastly, you will have a most sure title to eternal life and happiness after death.

Neg. There is no man, sure, who is in

in his right mind, but would desire to be a member of this family, if he could hope to do what will be required of him as a Christian.—For, as I remember, you told me, that a Christian has many enemies and difficulties to strive with.

Min. That is true!—But then take this most certain truth along with you,—That a righteous and good God will not require any thing of his creatures, but what he will enable them to do, if they will but do the best they can;—every person, who sincerely purposed to become a christian, having a most sure promise of being assisted by God's Holy Spirit to please his Maker, and to keep his commands.

And, forasmuch as we must be made holy as ever we hope to be happy, it is this good and Holy Spirit, that must assist to make us so:—Which he doth,—by putting into our hearts good desires and purposes of pleasing God, and a fear of offending him;—by convincing us, that nothing is required of us, but what is absolutely necessary for our good and happiness,—by helping our good endeavours, and defending us against the malice and power of evil spirits;—by setting home upon our hearts, the joys and happiness that are proposed to us, and the dreadful misery which will be the portion of such

as despise them :—All which that Holy Spirit doth perform in us by a sure, though an invisible power.

Neg. How can we be sure of this, since you say he is not to be seen?

Min. Can you see the wind?

Neg. No.

Min. How can you be sure there is such a thing?

Neg. Because I hear the sound of it, and feel the force of it upon myself.

Min. Are you sure, that you have a soul or spirit within you, which governs all your actions?

Neg. I am sure of that, because I feel something within me, sometimes telling me I do right, and sometimes saying I now do wrong, according as I do what is good or otherwise.

Min. Yet you never saw that power; you are sure of it only by what you feel.

Neg. Pray make that plain to me.

Min. Do not you know a tree by the fruit it bears?—Doth not a good tree bring forth good fruit?—Doth not a corrupt tree bring forth bad fruit?—Just so, when a good spirit governs any person, you see it plainly by his life and behaviour;—as also, when you see any man lead an evil life, you may be sure he is governed by an evil spirit,

Neg.

Neg. I understand you very well;—and would be thankful, if you would let me know what are the fruits by which I may know a good spirit from one that is evil?

Min. The sure signs, that the Holy Spirit of God governs any man, are these following fruits:—A love of God, and of men for his sake;—Living in peace, as much as we can, with all others;—Forgiving those that have injured us, as we hope to be forgiven our many offences against God;—A readiness to do good to all men and women, whether friends, relations, or even enemies;—A constant endeavour to mortify our corrupt affections, our lusts, and evil desires;—Being content with our condition; — Being humble, meek and temperate;—these, and such as these, are sure signs, that a man is governed by the Holy Spirit of God.

On the other hand,—The sure signs of a man's not being governed by the good Spirit, are such evil fruits as these following: adultery, fornication, idolatry, witchcraft, envy, hatred, and malice; a disposition to revenge and murder, drunkenness, revellings, and such sins as these;—God having expressly declared, that they who do such things shall never be happy, but shall after death be shut up with those

evil spirits, by whose wicked suggestions they had been seduced to commit them.

Neg. One would think, that such as know the dreadful punishment denounced against wickedness, would never persist in it, but immediately endeavour to escape from so dangerous a condition.

Min. They certainly should do so;—but having wilfully forsaken the ways of God, they have grieved the Holy Spirit, and forced him to depart from them, and to leave them to themselves;—so that their hearts are hardened, and their minds are void of understanding.

Neg. If I remember well, you told me, that all men are subject to sin, even Christians, as well as others, though they have received that Holy Spirit, for a principle of a new life.

Min. I told you so, and I told nothing but the truth; for so they are, until by that good spirit they are made holy, which is not to be expected till we die, and go to heaven.—I told you also another truth:—That a Christian is not one who has no failings;—but he is one, who, by the power and favour of that Holy Spirit, watches and strives against the corruption of his nature continually, so as never to live in any known sin whatever.

Neg.

Neg. I remember you told me so before: And I am convinced of the truths you have now explained to me. And I must beg of you to let me know, what will be required of me in order to my being baptized, and made a member of that family, to which you have convinced me so many blessings have been promised by the great God.

Min. That I will very willingly do, the next time you come to me. And do you forget not to beg of God—to give his blessing and success to such as desire and strive to instruct you in the ways of life and happiness.

INSTRUCTION VII.

Being an Abstract of the former Instructions.

NEGRO.

KIND Sir, I am come to put you in mind of your promise to teach me, How I may be made a member of that family, to which you told me so many blessings do belong.

C 6

Min.

Min. I would now do it, but upon second thoughts I think it will be best for you, that I put you again in mind of the things you have already learned, that you may be able to answer every one who shall ask you,—Why you chuse to be a christian?—And that your faith being surely established, you may be convinced, that it is your interest, as well as duty, to be a christian; and that you may not hereafter become a scandal to that religion.

Neg. I heartily thank you for so kind a proposal; and I will hear you most willingly.

Min. You have said, that you are fully convinced,—that there is but one God of all the nations of the world: that white people and black people have but one God—who is,—most wise, powerful, holy, just, and good;—and who, after he had made the world, and all things in it, by his great power, made man, and gave him reason, that he might have a creature on earth capable of knowing and serving his Maker.

Neg. I do most firmly believe all this.

Min. How then do you think it comes to pass, that so many people who have reason, are so far from being an honour to that God, on whom they depend for life and breath, and all things which they enjoy

enjoy or hope for,—that they neither fear, nor love, nor honour, nor are concerned to please him?

Neg. I have not, Sir, forgot the account you gave me,—how this came to pass;—how the first parents of mankind came to fall from that happy temper and condition in which they were made,—by yielding to the temptation of an evil spirit, and breaking a strict command, which their Maker had given them for a trial of their obedience:—And what a sad change and disorder was thereby made in their nature, and in the world, insomuch that both they, and their posterity, which inherited their corrupt nature, became prone to evil, and subject to sin and death, and to all the sorrows, miseries, and afflictions, which lead to death;—and that this was the true occasion of all the mischiefs and wickedness which we see and hear of in the world.

Min. I am very glad you remember this so well.—For, indeed, without the knowledge of this unhappy fall of man, and the corruption of our nature which followed, you can never fully understand, nor truly value, the wisdom, the justice, the mercy, and the goodness of God; nor would the christian religion appear to you so great a blessing as indeed it is.

Neg.

Neg. You will be so kind as to explain this to me a little more; that I may embrace it with full satisfaction, and never forsake it.

Min. You will remember what I told you before:—That we know, and are assured of this, by a writing which came from God, of which we have most undoubted proofs, as you yourself have heard, and by which we are informed, how merciful God was in sparing the lives of these our unhappy parents, which they had forfeited by their great offence, and for the sake of his beloved Son, who undertook to see his justice fully satisfied, and to use all proper ways to make men know their faults, and bring them back to the duty they owe to their Maker.

That in order to this, his Son, who is called Christ, and from whom we christians have our name, came down from heaven to earth, and was made man, and talked with men,—and declared unto them, how that he was a peace-maker betwixt God and his sinful creatures;—that he was the Son of the most high God;—and a messenger sent from him to make his will known unto men;—and that God had committed the government of all mankind to him.

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All which God himself confirmed by a voice from heaven.—And his Son, when on earth, convinced all who were disposed to receive the truth, that these things were true, by his doing such wonderful works as none but God could do,—by the holiness of his life, by the most righteous laws which he gave unto men;—and above all, by his rising again from the dead, after he had, by wicked hands, been murdered.

Neg. All this I remember, and only desire you will repeat the message which this wonderful person brought from God to men.

Min. In the first place,—he made known to them,—that their happiness or misery would depend upon their good or bad behaviour in this world:—For that God had appointed a day in which he would judge the world most righteously,—reward the good, and punish the wicked:—That as his justice could not let sin go unpunished,—so his goodness would not let his unhappy creatures be ruined, except they obstinately refused to accept of the merciful terms proposed to them.

That therefore God had been pleased, for his sake, to promise,—that all such as should be made sensible of their bad condition, and would return to the duty which

which they owe to their Maker, shall have all their past offences pardoned, shall be received into his favour again, and be made for ever happy with him :—But that all who know this, and would not receive, and thankfully comply with, so kind an offer, shall die in their sins, be sent to hell, and be shut up with the devil and all the tribe of wicked spirits.

Neg. Will you now, Sir, be so good as to let me know the way which this wonderful person did make use of to prevail with men to embrace this most kind message of God to men?

Min. In the first place, he shewed them what great love God had for his unhappy creatures, who were wilfully going on in the way of ruin, without perceiving it :—And that he was so good as to send his own Son from heaven to save them from destruction.

He told them further,—That the sins of men were so many, and so great, that no less a satisfaction would be accepted for their pardon, than the death of his own Son ; and therefore he had taken upon himself the cause of sinners, and put himself in their place and stead.

And God, to shew men how well he was satisfied with his Son's sufferings for the sins of men, raised him from death,

and

and set him at his own right-hand; where he liveth for ever, to make intercession for all such as come unto God by him.

Neg. All this I remember, and I cannot but admire the great love of God and Christ for such unworthy creatures.— Pray, have any other ways been taken of bringing men to know the duty they owe to their Maker, and of making them happy?

Min. I hope you have not forgot what I told you,—That after Jesus Christ went up to heaven, he sent down the Holy Ghost upon his Apostles in a most wonderful manner, who appointed that family which we call the Church of Christ, as the most proper way of bringing men to the knowledge of the true God,—and of the duty they owe to him, to themselves, and to all mankind.

For in that family he has appointed certain persons his ministers, who are to watch for the souls of men, as they that must give account of them;—to let them know what they must do to be saved;—to minister to men the means of grace and salvation;—to instruct the ignorant;—to comfort and help the weak, and raise up them that fall;—to offer up to God prayers and thanks for all men;—and, whether white or black, to endeavour that all men may

may attain that happiness, which Jesus Christ has purchased by his most precious blood.

Neg. This I have not forgot: Nor what you told me further, that forasmuch as God has determined to judge mankind according to their behaviour in this life, he has given to christians certain laws and rules, by which they shall be judged to happiness or misery, at that great day;—and that these laws and rules are to be found in that book which you call the word of God, because it was written by men appointed of God.—May I beg you to give me a short account of that book?

Min. In the first part of those scriptures, called the Old Testament, or Bible, we have an account of the creation of the world, and of God's infinite power, wisdom, justice and goodness in the government of it;—how in all ages he often protected and blessed the good, and punished the wicked;—in order to convince men, that he sees and ordereth all things for his own glory, and the good of his creatures.

In that part of the scriptures which we call the gospel,—we have a particular account of the life of Christ;—his most perfect example;—his most holy precepts;—some

some of his numberless and wonderful miracles;—how he was approved of God to be his Son, and the messenger of his will to men;—how he was by wicked hands crucified and slain: That he died, was buried, and rose again the third day from the dead,—conversed with his followers, and in their sight went up into heaven; from whence he sent down the Holy Ghost, who enabled them to speak all manner of languages;—that they might be able to teach all men these wonderful things, and to bring them to the knowledge of the truth, that they might be saved;—and lastly,—how great numbers of all the then known world embraced the christian religion;—that is, all such as feared God, and were concerned to save themselves from that wicked generation, saw plainly, that the christian religion was most agreeable to reason; and the blessings it proposed to men, greater than all the world besides could give them.

Neg. Will you be so good as to repeat again the chief of those great truths, and the blessing you speak of?

Min. The truths which concern us to know are such as these:—That our life here is only a state of trial, and a passage to a life either of happiness or misery, which is to last for ever;—that this happiness

pines or misery will be according to our good or bad lives;—that such as have led the best lives, have done many things displeasing to an holy God;—that the christian religion, and that only, has made known to us, how such as have fallen under God's displeasure may be restored to his favour, and have all their offences pardoned;—and to live so as to be a blessing to themselves and to others.

In short,—the christian religion proposes a remedy for all the evils we are subject to, which we either feel or fear;—and is designed to restore men to that holy temper which is necessary to fit them for heaven and happiness;—that is, to make them truly good, honest, kind, sober, chaste, and temperate, peaceable and useful in their generation.—And it will be their own fault, if they are not such;—for this religion affords them all the encouragement and assistance, that they can demand or desire.

Neg. You have, Sir, fully convinced me of the great blessing of being a christian; for which I heartily thank you.

Min. Give God the thanks; it is he only can open your eyes, to see both your danger, and your interest.

Neg. If I shall not be too troublesome, I would only ask you at present, what answer

fwer I shall give to such of our people as shall pres me to tell them,—Why I am resolved to become a christian?

Min. After what you have already learned, you can tell them with truth,—that you found you wanted something which you had not in yourself, to make your mind easy, and your condition safe;—that your own reason convinced you,—that such a creature as man could not be made, and sent into the world, only to eat and drink, and live and die, as the beasts of the field;—that you had often wished to know for what end the great God made men;—what service they owe him;—whether the way you were in was pleasing or displeasing to him;—and often wished to know,—what becomes of men after death.

You can tell them, that none with whom you had talked, could give you any reasonable satisfaction concerning these things,—until, meeting with sober people among christians, you have been convinced,—that you, and many other people and nations, had lost the knowledge of the only true God, who made the world, and all things in it;—and that christians have amongst them a writing, which gives them a full and most worthy account of the great and good God,—how he made
of

of one blood all the nations of the earth;—what good and innocent creatures he made the first man and woman—and how they and their children came to be changed so much for the worse, and subject to such evil dispositions, to so many miseries and afflictions as now we see they are.—By those writings you can tell them, Christians are told how wonderfully good and kind God will be to such as diligently seek him, and desire to please him;—and that all who are not enemies to themselves, may be as happy as their own hearts can wish.

You can tell them,—That God has made known in these writings, what men ought to do, and what to avoid, if they hope to please their Maker and their Lord;—what great happiness they will deprive themselves of, if they strive not to know, and to do, his will;—for that such as obey his commands will, when they die, be happy for ever;—free from pain, from sorrow, from cares, from oppression, from sickness,—and that all wicked and ungodly people will be condemned to everlasting torments with the devil and all wicked spirits.

If they ask you,—how Christians can be assured, that these writings and truths came from God?—you may tell them,—that if any man sincerely desires to know

God's will, he shall find such proofs as shall convince him, that these writings, and the doctrines they contain, are from God.

If they tell you, that many Christians live as if not one word of those scriptures were true; you may tell them,—that all good Christians are much concerned for the offence these give to you and to others:—That indeed they are no true Christians, but such as being unwilling to forsake their sins, and resolved to follow their lusts without disturbance,—strive to forget the truths they have learned, because the remembrance of them makes them uneasy;—and being by a just judgment of God left to themselves, they have at last lost all sense of the dreadful punishment which hangs over their heads:—that this falling away of Christians from their holy religion, and turning the grace of God, which teaches them to deny all ungodliness, and worldly lusts, into wantonness, is so far from being an objection to the truth of Christianity, that it is an argument for it;—since this was foretold by the divinely inspired penmen of the Holy Scriptures,—that there would be some, who would hold the truth in unrighteousness,—and others that would draw back

to

to perdition, and quite forsake the holy commandments.

Neg. Kind Sir, your repetition of these things, for which I am most thankful, has confirmed me in my earnest desire to become a Christian.—And I beseech you, once more, to instruct me,—what will be required of me in order to be made a member of that family which you call the church of Christ.

Min. That I will gladly do, when you come to me again.—And may that good Spirit, which has put this good thought into your heart, keep you in this good disposition!—And do not yourself forget to beg of God,—that he may perfect the good work which he has begun in you.

INSTRUCTION VIII.

Of BAPTISM, and what is required from those who shall be Baptized.

MINISTER.

I AM glad to see you here again so soon. 'Tis a good sign you are in earnest, and sincerely desirous of becoming a christian.

Neg.

Neg. Indeed, Sir, so I am.—You have convinced me, that it is for the good of my soul to be a christian.

Min. I must not suffer you to be under such a mistake; it was not I alone that could convince you;—it was the good Spirit of God, who is always ready to enlighten the minds, and open the hearts, of such as are in fear for themselves, and would gladly know the will of God, and the way to please him.—I am only his messenger to you, and, I hope, for your everlasting good.

Neg. I hope so too.—And therefore am now come to be instructed,—How I may be admitted into the family of christian people.

Min. You must know then, that Christ, the Son of God, and the head and governor of that family, has appointed two holy ordinances, which we call sacraments, to be of perpetual use in his church,—as signs, seals and pledges of God's fulfilling his promises of blessing, upon our compliance with the rules of our duty; and by which he has determined to bestow his favours and blessings on such as are worthy of them:—The one is called Baptism, or the Washing of Regeneration, by which all that are well disposed and qualified, are to be received into his church, which is

the family of all christian people throughout the world :—The other sacrament is called—the Lord's Supper, and appointed by Christ himself, as the way by which that family is to keep up the remembrance of what he has done and suffered to redeem them from misery.

By the sacrament of Baptism, God is graciously pleased to enter into covenant with his poor creatures, whereby he promises, on his part, to take them under his especial protection, and to give them all that is necessary to fit them for heaven and happiness, when they die ;—and christians, on their part, bind themselves to become Christ's faithful servants unto their lives end.

Neg. Sir, you often mention our being God's servants, and serving God :—Does God want any service that we can do him?

Min. No, truly : He stands in no need of our prayers, our praises, or our services.—They cannot profit him :—But he having given us certain commands about our addressing ourselves to him in adorations, supplications, and thanksgivings ; when we obey these commands, (though purely for our own good,) he is graciously pleased to deem it serving, honouring, and glorifying him, though in truth we only profit ourselves hereby.

Neg.

Neg. You will be pleased to let me know when and how Christ appointed the sacrament of baptism?

Min. Just before he left this world, he gave his apostles, who were his ministers, this command:—Go ye, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost;—teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.

Now here are several things, which I would have you carefully to observe and remember:—First,—the very great necessity of believing and receiving the message which God sent to the world by his Son:—Secondly,—the necessity of being joined to his church by baptism, when that blessing can be obtained:—Thirdly,—the dreadful condition of such as obstinately continue in their unbelief, when the gospel is preached to them:—And lastly,—observe the very strict command of Christ to his ministers, first to teach, but then to teach only, whatever he has commanded; by which true ministers of Christ are to be known from false teachers.

Neg. How is baptism administered?

Min. By dipping the person under water, or pouring or sprinkling water upon him, at the same time saying these

D 2 words;

words ; I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Neg. What do you mean by being baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost ?

Min. It is for men, who through the corruption of their nature are not fit to be called the children of God, to be by this washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, born as it were again, made new creatures, and thus admitted into a new covenant, on condition of their sincerely promising to believe and obey whatever is commanded in the gospel of Christ, in the name of God the Father, who created them ; of God the Son, who redeemed them ; and of God the Holy Ghost, who enlightens and sanctifies them.

Neg. Are all persons capable of baptism ?

Min. Yes :— Both infants and grown persons.

Neg. What is required of those persons who are grown to years of discretion, in order to their baptism ?

Min. Faith and repentance ; that is, to believe sincerely all the doctrines of the gospel, and to repent of all former sins.

Neg. But what if he fall again into sin ?

Min. It is then necessary, that he should restore himself to the benefits of his baptism by a renewal of his repentance.

Neg. But why are infants baptized, who are not capable of these qualifications?

Min. Though they are not capable of faith and repentance, they are capable of being admitted into covenant with God, as the children of the Jews were, by the especial appointment of God, by circumcision.

Neg. What is meant by using water with such as are baptized?

Min. It is an outward sign or token, signifying, and assuring us, from Christ himself, that as our bodies are made clean by water, so surely the souls of all, who are true believers and penitents, being thus dedicated to God, are cleansed from all past sins, and are put into the way of salvation, by being admitted into the church of Christ, and made members of his mystical body, which is the blessed company of all faithful people.—And lastly, we are, by the words used in this ordinance, made to understand, how our salvation is brought about;—that is to say,—by God the Father, who loved us, even after we had rebelled against him:—By his Son, who purchased salvation for

us:—And by the Holy Ghost, who sanctifieth us.

Neg. Pray, Sir, explain this a little clearer and fuller to me.

Min. You must know then, that—the washing, pouring or sprinkling water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, confirms and seals to the person thus baptized, the covenant of repentance, for the remission of sins, of which covenant Christ is the mediator; for by him only we have access to the Father.—We are born in sin, and liable to the displeasure of our Maker; but, by embracing and complying with the terms of the gospel, we become children of God, according to the new covenant;—and by outward sensible signs, or sacraments, are confirmed in the hopes of eternal life, the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ our Lord:—But then remember, if you do not strive to live in obedience to the commands of your heavenly Father, it will be no profit to you at all to be called the child of God.—Lastly, by baptism, you are admitted into the hope of everlasting happiness, and to a title to the inheritance of the saints, upon your believing, embracing, and obeying, the gracious terms of the gospel of the blessed Jesus.—God will then treat you,

you, as a father does the child he loves : He will, upon your hearty repentance, and sincere return to your duty, pity your infirmities, and forgive all your past offences. He will correct you in mercy, when you do what would hurt yourself ; and will upon your prayers, for the sake of his Son Jesus Christ, give you the grace of his all-powerful Spirit, to guide, assist, comfort and support you in the way leading to everlasting life.

Neg. These are blessings so very great, that I most earnestly desire to be informed,—what is required of persons in order to their being baptized ?

Min. After the promise of these blessings made by Christ, which he for his part will most surely keep and perform ;—you on your part must promise, first of all,—

To forsake the devil, and all his works.

The world, and all its evil ways and customs.

And the flesh, and all its sinful lusts.

And you must promise—

That you will receive and believe the truths and message which God sent unto men by his Son, which are contained in the Holy Scriptures of the New Testament, and summed up in what we call the Apostles Creed, which you must get by heart, and mind every thing there said.

And in the last place you must promise to keep God's ten commandments to your dying day, and you must get them by heart as soon as you can.

And here, as on one hand I would not discourage you, so on the other I must tell you the truth,—that these things are not so easily performed as promised.

Neg. I see I must give you the trouble of explaining yourself further: I should be glad therefore to know what sort of life is required of a person that is come to years of discretion, after he is baptized, that I may not promise what I do not understand, nor undertake more than I am able to perform.

Min. You remember, I hope, what I have often told you, that this life is a state of trial; that God having prepared the greatest happiness for such as love, honour, and obey him,—that he may make them fit for the reward he intends them, he hath determined to try their faith, their love, and their obedience.—Not that he is ignorant of their hearts, and their sincerity;—but his design is by these trials to shew them to themselves, and to humble them, by seeing how much they must depend upon his grace and help;—and to shew the power of his grace over the greatest enemy of their souls.—He has therefore

therefore permitted evil spirits to make this trial, by tempting men to the sins which they renounced at their baptism.

Neg. I remember what you told me concerning the devil, and his evil spirits; that they were such as rebelled against their Maker, and for that sin were cast out of heaven;—that their evil nature leads them to tempt and draw men from the true God;—and that God permits them to try the faith of christians, and to execute his judgments upon sinners.—Besides these enemies of our souls, I remember what you told me, and what I find true by experience, that we have an enemy within ourselves, even our own corrupt nature, very prone to evil; and that we have also an evil world, and evil examples, to lead us to forget, or to neglect God, and our own promise.

Min. I am glad you remember these things so well.—I must therefore now give you the necessary advice, which our Lord Christ has given to all such as design to become christians;—that is,—to do what all wise men will do, who have any thing of moment to undertake,—to sit down and consider, what it is to be a christian:—Lest afterwards you expose yourself to shame, and disgrace the religion you profess, as too many do.

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Neg.

Neg. I heartily thank you, Sir, for this caution and advice;—and beg you will let me know the sins I may be tempted to;—and how I may oppose and avoid falling into them.

Min. The sins to which the devil and his evil spirits are most eagerly bent to tempt men,—are, first of all, to forsake the true and only God, to trust in themselves, and to fear and worship other beings.—This is called idolatry, and provokes God to give such persons up—to a mind void of judgment—to commit all iniquity with greediness.—This is the sad case of all the nations of the world, who worship not the true God.—They are under the power of satan, his angels, and his agents; and so are you, until through the favour and mercy of God you are received into his church and family.

Revenge, and murder, that too often follows it, are satan's darling temptations; by which millions of souls have been sent out of this world.—This is what you must resolve against, as a sin more especially hated of God.—If you are injured or oppressed, you must leave your cause to God:—He, and he only, knows what punishment every injury and injustice require; and will call offenders to an account in his own proper time. It is true, revenge is sweet,

sweet, and tempting to our corrupt nature; but corrupt nature you must not follow, if you resolve to be the servant of God.

Another sin, to which the devil tempts men, is lying:—He is the father of lies, and would have all men like himself; because he knows what God has declared, that such as love and make lies, shall have no inheritance in his kingdom. This you will consider and resolve against, as you hope for the favour of God.

Lastly, You must know,—that the devil hath his agents in every place:—these are men of wicked lives, and wicked principles;—who make a mock of sin;—who fear not to blaspheme that God, who can destroy both body and soul in hell.—Now the Spirit of God has assured us, that conversation with such persons will corrupt good manners.—Here then will be your trial;—and you ought to consider beforehand, whether the pleasure of such company shall prevail with you to neglect the counsel of God; which is, to avoid them, as you would avoid your own destruction:—Or whether you will run the hazard of being ruined for ever, by talking with such wicked persons.

The next thing, which at your baptism you promise to renounce, is—the world,

and all its evil customs and manners;—as also, all the sinful lusts of the flesh, so that you will not follow nor be led by them.

Neg. I am afraid, Sir, that without your instructions I shall not understand this as I ought.

Min. You will remember,—that this is not the world for which you were chiefly made;—nor must you look for any true and lasting happiness here.—Now you will meet with many things in the world, which will tempt you with an appearance and shew of happiness; and if you are not resolved to avoid them, they will turn your heart from the love of God, and the care of your soul.

Neg. You will be so kind as to let me know what these are.

Min. The Spirit of God will tell you:—They are the lusts of the flesh;—that is,—all sinful, unchaste, and impure pleasures, and whatever leads to such sins.—Secondly,—The lust of the eyes;—that is,—all sinful and covetous desires, and love of riches.—And, thirdly,—The pride of life;—or an excessive value of themselves, accompanied with an unreasonable desire of the esteem of the world.

Neg. Pray let me know more particularly what are the lusts of the flesh, which I am to resolve against.

Min.

Min. I will repeat to you the very words of God, that you may be convinced I do not tell you any thing but what will be necessary to your salvation.—Now these works of the flesh are manifest; that is, they may easily be known by any considering person, though never so unlearned, to be displeasing to a good and holy God.— Such are adultery, whoredom, idolatry, witchcraft, drunkennes, hatred, malice, revenge, strife, seditions, murders, revellings, stealing, swearing, and such like.— Now however tempting many of these sins may be,—you must sit down, consider, and resolve against them, or never hope for the favour of God.

Neg. You will now let me know what is meant by—the lust of the eyes.

Min. I told you before, that it is the eager and covetous desire of riches. And that you may be convinced how dangerous a sin this is, you shall hear what Christ himself has said,—That it is very hard for rich men to be good christians;—because they are so much exposed to many evils and temptations;—such as these following:— They that have riches are apt to love them too much,—to put their trust in them, and to forget their dependence upon God;— and to make provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Besides

Besides all these,—wealth is often attended with such cares as choke the good seed sown in the heart of men, that is, the holy desires, and good resolutions, which are wrought in men by the Spirit of God, so that this good seed becometh unfruitful.

And though riches may be made use of to good purposes, yet it will require a more than ordinary grace of God so to use them ;—which extraordinary grace is seldom asked by, and therefore seldom given to, such whose hearts are possessed with the love of riches.

Neg. One would conclude then,—that christians ought not to desire riches so eagerly as generally they do ;—nor ought they who want them to think themselves unhappy, or not beloved by God.

Min. That is very true. And they who will not be convinced of these truths, by what God has declared in his word, will one day be convinced by sad experience, when it may be too late to do them any service.

Neg. Well, Sir, I see sufficient reason, why every one, who purposes to become a christian, should renounce the devil, and all his works,—the vanities of the world, and the lusts of the flesh. I am also convinced of the great advantage those will reap,

reap, who are able to overcome these difficulties. But then I am discouraged exceedingly, when I see so many, who have undertaken to be christians upon these conditions, in a manner renounce that religion afterwards,—either finding it impossible to observe these conditions, or thinking that they are not so very necessary to salvation, as you say they are.

Min. Believe not this, because of our saying so only; but because the God of truth and mercy hath so said, who would have all men come to the knowledge of the truth, and requires nothing to be done or avoided by christians, but what is absolutely necessary to their salvation;—and which he will enable them to perform, if it is not plainly their own fault.

As for such as call themselves christians, but do not the things which Christ has commanded, you must not judge of the christian religion by them, but by your own sense and want of a redeemer. The christians you speak of have never truly considered the great danger they are in; —nor what the Son of God has declared: —That it were better for them, that a mill-stone was hanged about their necks, and they cast into the sea, than they should be the occasion of offence to well disposed people.—And indeed, none serve the designs.

signs of satan more than such sort of christians;—and who have no other choice, but a true and timely repentance, or everlasting misery.—And repentance, one would hope, they would chuse, if they would consider the great patience of God, which ought to fill their eyes with tears, and their hearts with that shame and sorrow, which is the work of true repentance.

Do but remember what I have told you before, that a true faith in God, and in his word, will enable you to overcome all the difficulties you can possibly meet with; and when you come next, I will shew you that Jesus Christ has appointed an holy ordinance to be observed by all christians, on purpose that they may always remember the wonderful things he has done, and the great blessings he hath obtained for them:—particularly the sacrifice of his death, and the benefits which we receive by it;—the pardon of our sins, and the sure and certain hope of everlasting life.—When, therefore, you come again to me, I will explain this to you more fully than I can do at present, for want of time.

Neg. You have said enough, Sir, to make me return to you as soon as possibly I can.

INSTRUCTION IX.

*The SACRAMENT of the LORD's
SUPPER explained.*

NEGRO.

YOUR promise, Sir, to explain to me an Holy Ordinance, which, you told me, all christians are bound to observe, and have observed for a continual remembrance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, ever since that sacrifice was offered, this has brought me to you now, as soon as I could hope you would have time to instruct me.

Min. I have now time to do it.—You remember, I hope, what I have told you before;—that there are two especial Ordinances of the christian religion, which we call Sacraments, appointed by Christ himself as necessary means of salvation, when they may be regularly had.—These are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.—By baptism we are made christians;—at which time we enter into a covenant with God, —wherein, on our part, we promise,—to believe in him, to fear, to love, and obey him all our days:—And God, on his part,

part, receives us into his Family, which is his Church, and promiseth to treat us as his Children,—to protect us, while we live, and, when we die, to make us happy, if we have behaved ourselves as his Children ought to do; and thus we are made Christians, or give ourselves up unto Christ.

Neg. This I have not forgot.

Min. But then, forasmuch as this high favour hath been bestowed upon Christians, to be called and treated as the Children of God, not for any thing they have done to deserve it, but for the sake of what his Son Jesus Christ hath done and suffered for them;—he hath appointed another sacrament, which we call the Lord's Supper, in order to keep up the remembrance of what he hath done for us:—His laying down his life for us to redeem us from the wrath of God, to purchase us to himself to be a people zealous of good works.

Neg. Why do you call this sacrament by the name of the Lord's Supper?

Min. Because our Lord Christ did appoint this Ordinance at his last supper with his disciples, the evening before he was crucified, to preserve the memory and the reasons of his death; the knowledge of which is the foundation of the christian religion,

religion, and that on which the happiness and salvation of all men doth depend.

Neg. You will not wonder, if I am very desirous to know all that is necessary concerning this Ordinance.

Min. That you may do so, you must carry your thoughts back to the first Parents of Mankind;—that they rebelled against their Maker's command;—that they lost his favour, and all rights to the happiness which he had promised them;—that their very nature became prone to evil;—and both they and their posterity became subject to sin, to misery, and to death:—And lastly, that the Son of God, pitying their sad state, undertook to redeem them,—to satisfy his Father's justice, and to suffer in his own person for their sins; as also to give to them a spirit and principle of a new life, to mend that nature which they had so sadly spoiled.

In order to which, he was made man; and having put himself in the place of sinners, he offered himself to suffer death for their redemption, by which he restored them to his Father's favour, and put it into their power to gain the happiness for which they at first were made.

By which wonderful goodness, and most worthy sacrifice, God was so well pleased, —that he hath, for his Son's sake, promised

mised to pardon all penitent sinners, and to make them happy for ever.

Neg. All this I now remember you explained to me; and I thank you for putting me again in mind of it, and I hope now I shall never forget it.

Min. It will certainly be for your good to remember it; for indeed your happiness depends upon it.

Neg. Is it sufficient for me to remember in this sacrament, that there was such a person as Jesus Christ?

Min. No surely; much more is contained in it.—We are to call to mind his great love to mankind, which engaged him to take our nature upon him, and to submit to the infirmities and miseries of it, which made him content to live amongst us, and to die for us:—It is to call to mind his unwearied patience and diligence in doing good;—healing the sick, and instructing the ignorant; and particularly his most grievous sufferings and death, by which he made an atonement with his Father for the sins of mankind.—If we truly remember him, we shall strive to do as he has directed us: He has told us, that we must never swear nor steal, nor get drunk, nor keep company with any woman besides one, being a lawful wife.

Neg.

Neg. Where shall I learn the history of his life and actions, that I may follow his example?

Min. In the Four Gospels, or New Testament.

Neg. What do you mean by the Gospels?

Min. I mean four small Books, in which the life and actions of our Saviour are written for the benefit of all succeeding christians; and when it shall be your happiness to read them, you will there find great reason for remembering of Jesus Christ, and think you will be very ungrateful ever to forget so good a friend.

Neg. What need was there of this sacrament, since it seems impossible for men ever to forget so great a benefactor?

Min. Jesus Christ, who knew our nature better than we ourselves do, and how very apt we are to forget the greatest favours of God, has by this Holy Ordinance provided, that such as have any regard for his love, or even for their own happiness, shall never want a proper occasion of remembering what he hath done and suffered to redeem them from misery, and to put them in a way of being happy for ever:—He likewise intended this Holy Ordinance as a standing proof or evidence of this important fact of Christ's death, thereby

thereby to strengthen and renew our faith in it.

Neg. You will now, Sir, be pleased to let me know how he hath done this.

Min. Our Great Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the night before he was crucified, took bread, and blessed and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, that is given for you:—Do this in remembrance of me.—After supper also he took a cup of wine, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of this;—for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sin—Do this, as often as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me.—For as oft as ye shall eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come.

Neg. You will now, Sir, let me know how this sacrament is observed amongst christians.

Min. They do it after this manner:—First the minister of Christ placeth, or causeth to be placed, upon a table in our churches, a portion of bread and wine in the sight of all the people.—This bread and wine, which are to represent the sacrifice of Christ's body and blood, are sanctified, or set apart, for this holy use,

by giving thanks to God for all his favours, and especially for having sent his only Son to redeem us by his death; and by begging of him, that when we receive, and eat and drink this bread and wine, we may be so far made partakers of the sacrifice of his most blessed body and blood, as to share in all the benefits which he hath obtained for us by his death. At the same time he breaketh the bread into pieces, and poureth the wine into a cup, to represent unto our senses by these outward and visible signs, the death of Christ, whose body was broken, and blood poured out, upon the cross.

Neg. Pray, Sir, how doth he, after this, dispose of this bread and wine?

Min. This bread and wine, being sanctified by the word of God and prayer, he distributes among those who are there present;—putting them in mind, that Jesus Christ died for them, and for their salvation;—preferring their happiness to his own life;—that therefore they ought never to forget so great a kindness, but to keep up the remembrance of him, after this manner which he hath appointed, until his coming again.

Neg. Is this all that is required of christians—To keep up the remembrance of Christ, and of his death?

Min.

Min. No, surely;—no thoughtful christians think that alone sufficient.—They know that it is an humble heart in which Christ delights to dwell;—they therefore look upon this sacrament as a proper occasion of humbling themselves before God, and of detesting those sins which cost Jesus Christ his life and blood.

They know also, that the blessings obtained for us by Christ's death, of which this sacrament is a remembrance, are as much the food of the soul, as bread and wine are of the body;—that this food or support we receive by a lively faith in his merits; and do therefore, at this time, more especially acknowledge the efficacy of his death.—This is the true bread, which nourisheth to eternal life.—That God who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, will he not with him freely give us all things?

Besides this, every penitent christian will look upon this as a proper time to remember, and comfort himself with, the great extent of God's mercy declared by his Son,—That all sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men.

Every humble christian also, who feels in his soul the want of God's help to support him against the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil,—will think this

this a very proper time to beg of God his Son's promise,—That he will give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him.

Lastly,—Every christian must be supposed to receive this sacrament in token, that he acknowledgeth Jesus Christ to be his Lord and Saviour,—to be his lawgiver here, and his judge hereafter.

Neg. I remark, that Christ commanded this ordinance to be observed by his followers till his coming again: Pray, what is meant by that?

Min. Why, as I have told you before, we christians do know, and firmly believe, that Jesus Christ will come again at the end of the world—to judge the living and the dead;—to call all men that ever have lived to an account for the use they have made of the favours which God has given them; and to reward or punish them, as they have lived well or ill in this world.

And this intimation he gave his followers, when He appointed this ordinance, that they may consider, every time they go to this sacrament, what account they will be able to give of themselves, when he shall come to judge the world in righteousness.

Neg. Is there any thing else required of christians, before they go to this sacrament?

E

Min.

Min. Yes:—They ought, in the first place, to consider what sort of life they have led since they were made Christians; —at which time they obliged themselves to make the Laws of God the rule of their Faith, and Life, and Actions:—and to examine themselves, whether they have not led a wicked, at least, an idle, useless Life;—or whether they now live in any known Sin;—because they are bound, when they go to that Sacrament,—seriously to acknowledge their offences and sins before God, and to beg his pardon, with a full purpose of amendment of life; otherwise they will receive nothing there, but their own condemnation.

A christian is obliged also to have a grateful sense of God's goodness, by considering his mercy in sending his own Son to redeem us, whom by his death he hath reconciled to his Father, and put us in a way to be for ever happy, if it is not our own fault.

And lastly, Jesus Christ having expressly commanded,—That all his disciples should love one another, as he hath loved them, and given his life for them,—every christian is bound, before he goeth to this sacrament, to consider whether he hath any thing in his heart, contrary to this pattern of true love, and command of his Saviour.

Neg.

Neg. Do you believe, that christians are generally careful to prepare themselves for this ordinance after this manner?

Min. All serious christians are so:—But too many, it is to be feared, are not.—And this is the reason why so many christians receive no benefit from this sacrament;—for otherwise, this ordinance would be a more powerful restraint to keep them from leading a thoughtless and an evil life,—by affording them so many blessed occasions of remembering and renewing their covenant with God, laying them under continual obligations of leading a new and christian life, and obtaining grace from God to do so.

Neg. What do you think of those christians that never go to this sacrament?

Min. Why, they are generally to be esteemed in the way of ruin, without seeing their danger.—They do not consider, that, as they are sinners, God cannot be pleased with them;—and that there is no pardon for sinners, no salvation to be hoped for, but only through the merits of Christ's death, which is commemorated in this sacrament.

Neg. But sure, Sir, all christians are not so thoughtless;—they must have some reasons for neglecting so necessary a duty, as you seem to represent it.

E 2

Min.

Min. There may be reasons and scruples for absenting for a time;—but, generally speaking, some of these following are the true reasons, why men turn their backs upon the Lord's Supper, when invited to it, let them pretend what they please.

Either they live in some known sin, which they will not at present resolve to forsake;—or this world, its business or pleasures, have taken such possession of their hearts, that they have no time even to think of their souls, or of what must come hereafter:—Or lastly,—they delude themselves with a faint purpose, that thus it shall not always be with them;—that some time or other they will make the care of their souls their great concern. But such persons should consider, that while they thus neglect one of the greatest instances of God's love, they continue in a sin which too nearly resembles the denial of their Lord and Saviour: more particularly they should reflect, that by persisting in such a wilful disobedience to Christ's positive command, they have no well-grounded assurance, that any of their prayers will be granted: for as Christ's death is the only solid foundation of favour with God, so his mediation is the only channel, through which it is to be conveyed to christians. Whether therefore those who refuse

refuse to commemorate the one, can lay any just claim to the other, is left to every man's serious meditation:—And they should consider with what face they can hereafter appear before their Saviour in judgment, whom they refused to remember in his ordinance here on earth;—it having been observed,—That whatever keeps a christian from the sacrament, after he has been instructed in the true nature of it, will, generally speaking, hinder him from going to heaven.

Neg. Can a christian know whether he hath gone to this sacrament as he ought to have done, so as to hope for the blessings attending it?

Min. That will be best known by the manner of his life afterwards:—If a person went as a true penitent, he will be very careful of falling into the sins he hath repented of.—If he was indeed grieved with the remembrance of his sins, and the burden of them was intolerable;—if he did in good earnest purpose to lead a new life, he will be more careful to beg of God to enable him so to do.—If he went with a lively faith in God's mercy through Christ, that faith will appear in a better obedience to God's laws. If he had a thankful remembrance of Christ's death,—the grateful acknowledgment of that invaluable

blessing will constrain him to live so as to please his merciful Redeemer.—Lastly, if he went with a truly charitable disposition to the sacrament, he will afterwards make the love of Christ the pattern of his love for all others;—he will forgive, and give, and love, as becomes a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Neg. Will not the blessings which Christ hath obtained by his death, as represented by this sacrament, encourage christians to hope for salvation without amendment of life?

Min. Ignorant and careless people may delude themselves with such vain hopes;—but all well-instructed christians shall know,—that though Christ died for the salvation of all, yet those only shall enjoy the benefits of his death, who live according to the will and commands of him who died for them; that there will be no forgiveness of sins without repentance, and a reformation of life; and that the strictest adherence to this or any other positive ordinance of God will not avail, without an earnest and sincere endeavour to perform the whole will of God, as it respects him, our neighbour, and ourselves.

Neg. I cannot, Sir, but be very thankful for the great pains you have taken to instruct me, and to make me understand the

the nature and benefit of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper;—and indeed, Sir, I am very desirous to be baptized, if you know of nothing that ought to hinder me.

Min. I would not hinder you one moment;—but that I have one thing more to make you sensible of, before I would encourage you to be baptized.—And this is,—The delusion, the danger, and the mischief, of being a christian without christianity.

Neg. Indeed, Sir, I do not understand you.

Min. I will explain to you what I mean, when you come to me again.—In the mean time, I shall pray God to keep you in this good disposition, and from every thing that may any way hinder your true conversion.

INSTRUCTION X.

*The DELUSION, the DANGER, and
the MISCHIEF, of being Christians
without Christianity,*

NEGRO.

MOST kind Sir, I left you with a very great desire of being baptized; but you said you had something to say to me, before I was to be made a Christian: For that reason I am come now to wait on you.

Min. To tell you the truth then, notwithstanding the pains I have taken to instruct you, and to shew you both your true interest, and your great danger in not following it, I cannot but be afraid, lest when you come to be more acquainted with Christians, and instead of finding the good fruits which you might expect from so good a religion, you should find amongst too many, professing that religion, little or no fear of God, nor any true concern for themselves, or for what must come hereafter;—I cannot but be afraid therefore, lest, seeing this, you should be tempted to suspect the truths I have told you, and

and so either renounce Christianity, or else content yourself, as too many do, with the borrowed name of a Christian, and with mere shadows of religion, without endeavouring after that substantial holiness, without which no man must ever hope to be happy.

Neg. I am very thankful for your concern for me, and I shall hear with attention the instructions you will be pleased to give, to keep me from falling.

Min. You must know then,—that the Christian religion is intended by God to cure the corruption of our nature, and to make us happy, by making us holy, honest, and good;—by making Christians the best neighbours, the truest friends,—the kindest masters,—the most faithful servants,—the best husbands and wives,—the most careful and tender parents, and the most dutiful children,—most faithful and obedient subjects;—and above all, the devoutest worshippers of the true and only God, and strict observers of his laws.

—Now my fears are,—That when you shall see too many Christians live without any regard to these duties, professing to know God, but in their works denying him;—I say again, I cannot but be afraid for you,—lest you should forget the promises you made to God, when you were

baptized,—and fall into the way of the world, which leads to destruction.

Neg. Pray, Sir, what do you mean by the way of the world?

Min. I mean, that sad, but too common delusion, of being Christians without Christianity:—That is, of professing to obey the laws, and to follow the example of Christ, and at the same time leading careless and unchristian lives;—by which God is exceedingly dishonoured;—the gospel despised;—and too, too many deceived to their everlasting ruin;—the ill consequences of which can never be sufficiently lamented:—For the poor heathens observing, that these people call themselves Christians; and yet seeing them corrupt in their manners, disregarding the God they worship, and his laws;—minding neither his promises nor threats;—but having their hearts wholly set upon wickedness;—they, seeing this, do very naturally conclude,—that if such people as these can think themselves secure of happiness in the next life, no one needs to be concerned whether he be an Heathen or a Christian in this.

Neg. You remember, Sir, what I told you before, that this very thing had once made me resolve never to think of becoming a Christian; till you assured me, That such

such as these are no true Christians;—but are either wholly ignorant of what they profess, or deceive themselves with the thoughts, that there is something in the very name of a Christian, which may recommend them to the favour of God, and save them from his displeasure, and their own ruin.

Min. I told you the truth, and what the Son of God hath commanded all people to take notice of;—That not every one who calls himself a Christian, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but such only as do the will of his Father, which is in heaven, and observe his laws.

Neg. I shall be very thankful, if you will let me know who they are that thus deceive them, that I may not follow them to my ruin.

Min. I must first tell you, that there are those amongst us, who, being wise in their own conceits, will not receive the Son of God as their teacher, nor his Gospel as the rule of their faith and manners:

—Now these do often lead into very dangerous errors such people as do not know or consider, upon what certain proofs the truths of the Gospel are most surely believed amongst us.

Neg. I hope my belief in the Gospel is confirmed sufficiently, both by the many

and wonderful miracles of Christ, and especially by his resurrection from the dead.

Min. But you must not forget, That your faith, and the increase and continuance of it, is the gift of God, which you must pray for, as ever you hope to be preserved free from error.

Neg. Well, it is strange however, that people of understanding in other things, who cannot but see how much we are apt to be mistaken in the common affairs of life, should, in things of the greatest concern, wholly depend upon their own wisdom and power, even where God hath undertaken to direct and assist us.

Min. You will not wonder at this, if you remember, what hath been so often said and proved;—that such is the corruption of our nature, that when any man, thro' a proud conceit of his own wisdom and strength, shall provoke God to forsake and leave him to himself, that man will be capable of believing and doing the most unreasonable things, to which an evil spirit, or his own corrupt heart, can tempt him.

Neg. Pray, Sir, what other mistakes are there amongst Christians, which endanger their salvation?

Min.

Min. There are too many, who, for want of attention to the good instructions which are given them, consider not how they live, nor what will become of them when they die;—who know not the evil of sin, nor the mischiefs it has brought into the world;—how hateful it is to an holy God,—how strict his commands are to avoid it, and what the portion of sinners in the next life is to be;—and therefore propose no other end to themselves, in this, but only to live and die as easy as they can.—Beside those who walk in darkness, and know not whither they go, and are secure, because ignorant;—there are others, that are even afraid of being instructed.

Neg. That is strange indeed.

Min. But it is true: And the reason is, because, if we deal faithfully with sinners, we must tell them that their deeds are evil, and that they are in very great danger, if they do not forsake their beloved sins; and then they will hate both us, and those unwelcome truths which condemn them, and their way of life.

There are others also, who have been better inform'd, and perhaps well-inclin'd; but suffering their hearts to be possessed with the love of the world, its busines, riches or pleasures, they lose thereby the knowledge

knowledge and remembrance of the truth, and forget their good purposes, and fall into a way of living which the Christian religion condemns, and which will be punished with the loss of heaven and happiness. And there are too many, who, having not cast off all fear of God, and concern for their souls, do yet content themselves with a punctual performance of the external part of religion, vainly thinking, that an outward shew of religious worship will atone for the want of that inward purity of heart, which is indispensibly required from every Christian.

Neg. I would be glad to know, who this sort of mistaken Christians are.

Min. Beside those already mentioned, there are many, who, though they know themselves not to be in the way of salvation, make their minds easy, by purposing to repent, and be converted; foolishly supposing that repentance is absolutely in their own power;—at the same time provoking God, who alone can give them the grace of conversion, to leave them to their own choice and destruction.

Others flatter themselves, that repentance, and a change of life, are only required, where people have been guilty of great and scandalous Sins,—such as murder, adultery, and the like;—not con-
sidering

sidering that a man, who is innocent of great crimes, may be far from being a true Christian, and in the way of salvation; the best of men standing in need of repentance and pardon, and of the mercy of God.

Neg. I have heard, that Christians do depend very much upon the goodness and mercy of God.

Min. And so they may, and ought to do, provided they do not deceive themselves, by abusing his mercy, which is intended to lead men to repentance, and amendment of life.

Neg. Pray, how do men abuse this mercy of God?

Min. When they continue to live in any known sin, or wilfully neglect any duty; and yet hope, that God of his great mercy will forgive them.

Neg. You have often mentioned the corruption and weakness of human nature. Will not this plead our excuse, and prevail with so good and merciful a Being to pardon such as have not done what he hath commanded?

Min. Yes: And he hath faithfully promised, that upon condition of their repentance, and amendment of life, (according to the Gospel) he will pardon the greatest sinners.

Neg.

Neg. Perhaps they will say, that they are not able to perform these conditions.

Min. What would you think of one who should make that an excuse, and yet would be sorry to be made able, only because he is unwilling to part with his sins?

Neg. Such an one, to be sure, complains without reason, and his ruin will be from himself.

Min. And yet this is the case of all careless and wicked Christians.—God would have all his creatures happy;—he knows that man can never be happy, till his corrupt nature be mended;—he has therefore, as I told you before, appointed the Christian religion, as the most effectual means of our recovery from sin unto holiness.—By which we are taught to depend upon the almighty power of God, even that almighty power which raised Jesus Christ from the dead, to raise us from the death of sin unto the life of righteousness, by enabling us to see, to resist, to overcome, and to root out, whatever is evil in us, and to restore us to the image of God, in which man was at first created.—Christians, therefore, do but delude themselves, and blaspheme God, when they pretend they cannot do what he requires of them, in order to their happiness.

And

And to name no more ways at present, by which men deceive themselves to their ruin :—Very great is the number of such as depend upon a death-bed repentance, for the making their peace with God, and fitting themselves for heaven ;—living in the mean time without God in the world, neither fearing his anger, nor regarding his promises.

Neg. Indeed, Sir, these are all sad mistakes ; and I hope, I shall not fall into any of them.

Min. I hope so too ;—but then you must be very humble, and always fear for yourself, and beg of God to keep you from such mistakes which are the ruin of so many, who yet call and think themselves to be Christians ;—otherwise your being made a Christian will not secure you from danger.

Neg. Pray, Sir, what are the things which are most likely to offend the good Spirit of God, and force him to forsake such as are dedicated to him, and put under his protection ?

Min. In the first place, Christians do grieve that good Spirit,—by neglecting to improve the graces bestowed upon them ;—for, as I told you before, this is a rule of the gospel,—That to him who makes good use of the favours which God hath given

given him, God will give more ; and he that will not do so, shall lose what he had.

Neg. I hope I shall not forget this rule of truth.

Min. In the next place, a Christian runs the hazard of losing the help and comfort of the Spirit of God, by returning into that way of life, and to those sins, which he renounced at his baptism ;—especially when he falls into, and continues in, any known and wilful sin ;—for then he will naturally hate God, and God will forsake him.

Neg. Hate the God that made us !

Min. Why, as monstrous a sin as you think that is, it is certainly true :—For any man, whose conscience tells him, that he is always doing that which must offend an holy, just, and powerful God, cannot but wish there was no such Being to call him to an account, and to punish him ; nor can he possibly love such a Being.

Thirdly ;—Another way of grieving the Holy Spirit is by neglecting, which in Truth is despising those means of grace, which Jesus Christ hath appointed to bring men into, and to keep them in, the way of salvation.

Neg. I have not forgot what you have formerly told me ;—That the hearing, and seriously thinking, of the word of God,

God, in which a Christian's duty is contained, as well as the promises to encourage, and the punishments to deter us, is one of those means you speak of, most proper to convert men, and to keep them in the favour of God.

Min. And the others are;—The holy ordinances, which Christ himself hath appointed; the one to receive men into his Church, and the other to enable them to grow in grace.

Now, as the use of these means, joined with earnest prayer to God, for light to discover what is evil in us, and for power to root it out, is the sure way of preserving the fellowship of the Holy Spirit;—so, when any Christian, depending upon his own reason, wisdom, or power, and forgetting that all our sufficiency to do any good is of God, does neglect these means, the good Spirit will forsake such a person, and leave him to himself, and to the delusion and government of evil spirits; which, without a sincere repentance, will be his ruin.

Neg. This, I hope, will be a warning to me, never to neglect these means of grace and safety.

Min. And I hope too, that you will never forget to give God the glory of all the good you do; for be assured of this,—

That

That neither the reasonableness of any duty, nor the baseness of any sin, nor any other consideration, can enable you to do what is good, and well-pleasing to God, or to avoid what is evil, but only his grace, and that good Spirit, to which you are dedicated at your baptism.—To him you must apply for light to see your duty, and for power to perform it;—and to him you must give all the glory.

Neg. Since there are so many bad Christians to be met with, I should be glad to know who they are whose example I may safely follow.

Min. I would not advise you to make the lives and actions of other people altogether a pattern for you to follow; but always rather have an eye to what you believe will please or displease God, and what you know he has commanded or forbidden:—Although good and bad Christians may, for the most part, be known by the lives they lead, as a tree is known by its fruit.

When, therefore, you see men pay a great regard to God and his laws, honouring his holy name, and his word, and every thing belonging to him;—when you see them just, and kind, and merciful, and not given to revenge, but ready to forgive, and give and love, as becomes
the

the followers of Christ;—when you see them temperate and chaste, modest and humble, and dealing with others as they themselves would be dealt with;—you will have reason to take these for good Christians, if you are convinced, that they do those things out of love and obedience to God.

On the other hand,—If you see among those who call themselves Christians, such as make no conscience of their ways, but lead careless, idle, useless, or disorderly lives;—exceeding fond of the world, and its vanities;—and striving to be rich and great at any rate:—if you see any that live in adultery or fornication, or that are swearers, drunkards, thieves, covetous, or oppressors;—if you see parents unconcerned for their children's eternal welfare, —husbands and wives forgetting and breaking their marriage vows,—masters and servants never remembering, that they have a master in heaven;—if you see men in power regardless of the honour of that God, whose representatives they are; you may be sure, that these, and such as these, —are Christians without Christianity, and will be liable to a most severe judgment, for their opposing the gracious designs of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ.

Neg. Pray, Sir, what do you mean by that?

Min. Why, God is so good and merciful, That he would have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, all such as, taking the name of Christians, do lead unchristian lives, these oppose their Maker in his most gracious designs, bringing an evil report upon Christianity, as if nothing good were to be got by it,—making the ignorant heathens to take that for Christianity, which is far from it;—by which they hinder such as might otherwise desire to become Christians;—they confirm unbelievers in their infidelity, and serve all the designs of Satan in opposing the kingdom of Christ;—and therefore must of necessity be more hateful to God, and their punishment be greater than that of the heathens, as much as they now despise those poor people.

Neg. You have convinced me, Sir, of the danger of being a Christian without Christianity.—Will you be so kind as to shew me how I may avoid falling into such a way of life, as, it seems, too many do?

Min. In the first place, consider what a blessing it is, that you are not still in darkness, but that you are come to the knowledge

ledge of your Maker, and of the way to please him; whereby you will be happy when you die, whatever your lot may have been in this world.

And in the next place, keep it always in your mind,—That this God, whom you have chosen to serve, is every where present, so that if at any time you offend him, you offend in his very sight a God, who hath power to strike you dead upon the spot.

Be careful to keep yourself always sober;—Drunkenness and intemperance disorder our reason, and make us forget our best resolutions, and the dangers which encompass us.

Do not set your hearts upon this world, its honours, riches or pleasures; for besides that you must soon lose them, they will be apt to make you forget what you will gain or lose by being a good or bad Christian.

Never fancy that any sin is small; for the least known sin, continued in, will lead to a greater; and if you should provoke the Spirit of God to forsake you, you will be capable of committing the very greatest crimes. Human nature, as it is now corrupt, is the same in all men:—We are all subject to temptations;—and if ever, by our repeated crimes, we should

force

force the Spirit of God to leave us to ourselves, no man can tell, no man can foresee, what barbarous wickedness he shall be tempted to commit;—nor what unwelcome, unlooked for calamities, he may bring upon himself, while he goes from sin to sin, till he meets with destruction.

—For no man continues long at one certain pitch of wickedness;—for not only one evil habit begets another, but the more a man sins, the less capable he makes himself of judging what sin is, and the dreadful consequences of continuing in it.

—And the influences of God's holy Spirit, and the gracious interpositions of Providence have still less power upon his mind and soul, till he has quite forgotten his Maker,—till he has filled up the measure of his iniquities,—and till he meets with destruction, generally in this world, as well as the next.

Whenever, therefore, you are sensible you have done amiss, delay not one moment to beg of God to pardon you, and to give you grace to do so no more.

And forget not an excellent rule which I have formerly mentioned, to direct you in most actions of moment:—Do not, at your peril, undertake any thing, which you cannot with confidence beg of God to bless and prosper you in.

Lastly,

Lastly, and above all, remember, what cannot too often be repeated, That without faith,—a faith which worketh by love, which purifies the heart, overcomes the world, and keeps the commandments of God, you cannot possibly live as becomes a true Christian.

Neg. I beg you will explain what you mean by this.

Min. By this faith we mean a—deep, real sense, and firm Belief, of the mercy and Love of God, for his poor fallen and lost creatures, and his kind proposal by his own Son to make them happy for ever.—This is that saving faith, which will lead a Christian most powerfully to love God, and obey his Son Jesus Christ, to whom he hath given all power in heaven and earth:—This is that faith which will purify your heart, will lead you to repentance, and keep you in the way to eternal life; and this is what you must beg of God, for this faith is his gift; and that he may increase it in you unto your life's end.

Neg. I hope I shall never forget to pray for so necessary a grace.

Min. As you can say by heart the Belief, and the Lord's Prayer, and fully intend to learn the rest of the Catechism, I have only a few questions to ask you, in

order to your being baptized, which you must answer (to God) when you are called upon to make a public profession of Christianity.

And first,—Consider whether there are any ways of life, or customs, which at present you are fond of, which you will not utterly forsake, when you shall be convinced, that they are forbidden by God, or displeasing to him.

Neg. I know of none which I will not forsake, in order to please God.

Min. Will you sincerely devote yourself to God the Father and Maker of all things, that you may become his faithful servant unto the end of your life?

Neg. I purpose by this help to do so, and become such.

Min. Will you, with the same sincerity, devote yourself to his Son our Lord Jesus Christ, for whose sake God has promised to pardon all your sins, to receive you into favour, and to make you happy, if you continue to obey him all your days?

Neg. This I fully intend to do.

Min. Lastly,—Will you dedicate and devote yourself to the Holy Ghost, that good Spirit, that he may, by his all-powerful grace and help, keep you from sin and wickedness, and assist you in the way of holiness and happiness, that you may never

never be a disgrace to that religion which you are going to undertake?

Neg. I will most thankfully dedicate myself to him, that, by his assistance, I may be able to please God, and do what I have promised.

Min. You will not fail to do so, if you often consider, that your everlasting happiness or misery will depend upon your observing or neglecting the vows and promises you make at your baptism.

And if, to this, you add your sincere prayers to God, to direct and bless you in the work you are desirous to undertake, he will most surely hear your prayers, and grant your petitions, which you may make in some such words as these following.

P R A Y E R S.

MORNING PRAYER *for a Negro
in private.*

GLORY be to Thee, O God, who hast brought me safe to the beginning of another day.

O God, the Father of heaven, have mercy upon me, keep, and defend me.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon me, save, and deliver me.

O God the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon me, help and comfort me.

O Merciful God, grant that I may perform my duty this day faithfully and chearfully; and that I may never murmur, be uneasy, or impatient under any of the troubles of this life; but ever find rest and comfort in Thy gracious promise, that if I live well, I shall, after death, be for ever happy with Thee in heaven, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, my blessed Saviour. *Amen.*

Our

Our Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FAMILY PRAYERS *for Negroes to use in the Morning.*

Let all kneel down, and one say the following prayers.

GLORY be to Thee, O God, who hast brought us safe to the beginning of another day.

O God, the Father of heaven, have mercy upon us, keep, and defend us.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us, save, and deliver us.

O God the Holy Ghost, have mercy upon us, help and comfort us.

ALMIGHTY and everlasting God, who hast safely brought us to the beginning of this day, defend us in the same

with thy mighty power; and grant that we may, during the whole day, say no bad word, and that we may do no bad thing; but that in all our words and actions, we may glorify Thee, O God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O Merciful God, grant that we may perform our duty this day faithfully and chearfully, and that we may never murmur, be uneasy, or impatient, under any troubles of this life; but ever find rest and comfort in Thy gracious promise, that if we live well, we shall, after death, be for ever happy with Thee in heaven, through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour and Redeemer. *Amen.*

A Lmighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit; that we may perfectly love Thee, and worthily magnify Thy holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Lmighty and everliving God, who hast made all the people that are upon the face of the earth, and hast a love to

to every soul whom thou hast made; we beseech Thee to have mercy upon all Jews, Turks, Indians, and Negroes; take from them all ignorance and hardness of heart, and make of them one Christian family, under one master, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

*An EVENING PRAYER for a Negro
in private.*

MERCIFUL and gracious God, I give Thee humble thanks, for having preserved me this day; and that none

of thy judgments, for my sins have fallen upon me.

O Almighty God, from whom no darkness can hide me, and whose eye is continually upon me, deliver me from all temptations to sin against Thee this night, and preserve me from all the powers of evil spirits; and this I humbly beg, for the sake of my ever blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O God, of infinite mercy, pardon my sins of the day past, in thought, word, and deed; which I have committed through the fraud and malice of the devil, or through my own carnal will or frailness; and grant that they may never rise up in judgment against me. And by thy grace, O God, bring me through all the trials and temptations of this world, to a blessed end: That I may die in peace, and rest in hope, and rise in glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Our Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead

lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

FAMILY PRAYER for Negroes to use in the Evening.

All devoutly kneeling, let one say,

O Lord, and heavenly Father, we acknowledge thy great goodness to us, in sparing us when we deserve punishment, and setting before us the happiness of a better life: Give us grace, that we may lead and end our lives in thy faith and fear, and to thy glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty and everlasting God, we beseech Thee to bless and prosper all those whom thy providence hath set over us; and give us grace to obey and serve them for conscience-sake, in all their lawful commands: This we beg for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

O Almighty God, from whom no darkness can hide us, and whose eye is continually upon us, deliver us from all temptations to sin and wickedness this night, and preserve us from all the powers of the enemy of souls, for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O God, the Creator and Preserver of all mankind, we humbly beseech Thee, to make thy holy Gospel known to all Negroes, Jews, Turks, and Indians. Take from them all ignorance and hardness of heart, and make of them one Christian family, under one Master, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

GRANT, O Lord, that in all our sufferings here upon earth, we may steadfastly look up to heaven, and by faith behold the glory that shall be revealed. And grant, O God, that we may so perfectly, and without all doubt, believe in thy Son Jesus Christ, that our faith in thy sight may never be reproved, for the sake of the same Jesus Christ our blessed Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty

ALMIGHTY God, incline our hearts to every thing that is good, that we may be modest and humble, honest and just, temperate and diligent. And we humbly recommend to thy fatherly goodness our sick relations and friends, and all other sick and afflicted persons, whether friends or enemies; may it please thy divine Majesty, to comfort and relieve them, to give them patience under all their sufferings, and a happy deliverance out of all their afflictions: And this we beg for Jesus Christ his sake. *Amen.*

Our Father, which art in heaven; Hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation; But deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with us all evermore. *Amen.*

*Some of the following PRAYERS may
be used on Sundays, and other leisure
Days.*

P R A Y E R for Sunday Morning.

O Lord, as I am on this thy day going to Church, let thy Holy Spirit go with me, and make me devout and serious. Raise my mind to think upon the four last things, death, judgment, heaven, and hell. Make me to join fervently in the prayers of the Church, and to hearken to my duty with an honest heart, and serious attention. Give me grace to think and take care of my poor soul, that it may be saved through the merits of Jesus Christ, my ever blessed Lord. *Amen.*

P R A Y E R for Sunday Evening.

MOST gracious God, let me never forget the many good things which I have heard this day, but let them abide in my heart, so as to make my life better: that when I die, I may be able to give a good account of them to Jesus Christ our Lord and heavenly Master, when he shall come to judge the world at the last day. *Amen.*

MOST

MOST gracious God, who by thy wise Providence hast appointed to mankind their several stations, I beseech Thee to bless me with health of body and comfort of mind, that I may perform my daily task with cheerfulness and resignation, doing my duty as unto Thee, and not merely as unto men; trusting to thy gracious promise, for a reward of my honesty and faithfulness, which thou wilt give me, for the sake of my blessed Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

O Lord, grant me patience under any affliction thou shalt see fit to lay upon me, and a mind always contented with my present condition. Give me grace to be honest, sober and industrious, quiet and peaceable; to be compassionate to my poor afflicted relations, friends and neighbours, that so behaving well all my days, I may when I die, be happy for ever, through the merits of Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

ALMIGHTY God, give us grace that we may cast away the works of darkness, and put upon us the whole armour of light, now in the time of this mortal life, (in which thy Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility), that in the last day,

day, when he shall come again in his glorious Majesty to judge both the quick and dead, we may rise to the life immortal, through him who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, now and ever. *Amen.*

O God, whose blessed Son was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil, and make us the sons of God, and heirs of eternal life; Grant us, we beseech thee, that having this hope, we may purify ourselves even as he is pure; that when he shall appear again with power and great glory, we may be made like unto him in his eternal and glorious kingdom, where with thee, O Father, and thee, O Holy Ghost, he liveth and reigneth, ever one God, world without end. *Amen.*

A Lmighty and everlasting God, who, of thy tender love towards mankind, hast sent thy Son, our Saviour Jefus Christ, to take upon him our flesh, and to suffer death upon the crofs, that all mankind should follow the example of his great humility; Mercifully grant, that we may both follow the example of his patience, and also be made partakers of his resurrection,

rection, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O Lord, from whom all good things do come; Grant to us thy humble servants, that by thy holy inspiration we may think those things that be good, and by thy merciful guiding may perform the same, through our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

LE T thy merciful ears, O Lord, be open to the prayers of thy humble servants; and that they may obtain their petitions, make them to ask such things as shall please thee, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Almighty and everlasting God, give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity; and that we may obtain that which thou dost promise, make us to love that which thou dost command, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

LORD, we beseech thee, grant thy people grace to withstand the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil; and with pure hearts and minds to follow thee the only God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

O GOD

O God, forasmuch as without thee we are not able to please thee; Mercifully grant, that thy Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

GRANT, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, to thy faithful people pardon and peace; that they may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thee with a quiet mind, through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

OLORD, we beseech thee, absolve thy people from their offences; that through thy bountiful goodness we may all be delivered from the bands of those sins, which by our frailty we have committed. Grant this, O heavenly Father, for Jesus Christ's sake, our blessed Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

LIghten our darkness, we beseech thee, O Lord; and by thy great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son our Saviour Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

WE humbly beseech thee, O Father, mercifully to look upon our infirmities; and for the glory of thy Name, turn from us all those evils that we most righteously have deserved: and grant that in all our troubles we may put our whole trust and confidence in thy mercy, and evermore serve thee in holiness and pureness of living, to thy honour and glory, through our only Mediator and Advocate, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

H Y M N S.

For the MORNING.

A WAKE, my soul, and with the sun
Thy daily stage of duty run:
Shake off dull sloth, and early rise
To pay thy morning sacrifice.

Redeem thy mis-spent time that's past;
Live this day, as if 'twere thy last:
T' improve thy talents take due care;
'Gainst the great day thyself prepare.

Let

Let all thy converse be sincere ;
Thy conscience as the noon-day clear ;
Think how th' all-seeing God thy ways
And all thy secret thoughts surveys.

Wake, and lift up thyself, my heart,
And with the angels bear thy part ;
Who all night long unwearied sing,
Glory to the eternal King.

Glory to thee, who safe hast kept ;
And hast refresh'd me whilst I slept :
Grant, Lord, when I from death shall wake,
I may of endless life partake.

Lord, I my vows to Thee renew ;
Scatter my sins as morning dew :
Guard my first spring of thought and will,
And with Thyself my spirit fill.

Direct, control, suggest this day,
All I design, or do, or say ;
That all my pow'rs, with all their might,
In thy sole glory may unite.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow ;
Praise Him, all creatures here below ;
Praise Him above, ye angelic host :
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

For the EVENING.

Glory to Thee, my God, this night,
For all the blessings of the light.
Keep me, O keep me, King of Kings,
Under thy own Almighty wings.

Forgive me, Lord, for thy dear Son,
The ills that I this day have done;
That with the world, myself, and Thee,
I, ere I sleep, at peace may be.

Teach me to live, that I may dread
The grave as little as my bed;
Teach me to die, that so I may
Triumphing rise at the last day.

O may my soul on Thee repose;
And with sweet sleep mine eyelids close:
Sleep that may me more vig'rous make,
To serve my God when I awake.

When in the night I sleepless lie,
My soul with heavenly thoughts supply:
Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,
No pow'rs of darkness me molest.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise Him, all creatures here below;
Praise Him above, ye heavenly host:
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

For

For the Lord's Day.

THIS is the day, the Lord's own day,
A day of holy rest :
O teach our souls to rest from sin,
That rest will please Thee best.

This is the day, thy day, O Lord,
On which thou didst arise ;
For sinners having made thyself
A sinless sacrifice.

Thou, Thou alone, redeemed hast
Our souls from deadly thrall ;
With no less price than thine own blood,
The purchase of us all.

Had'st thou not dy'd we had not liv'd,
But dy'd eternally ;
We'll live to Him that dy'd for us,
And praise his name on high.

Thou, Lord, didst die, and rise again,
And didst ascend on high,
That we poor sinners, lost and dead,
Might live eternally.

Thy blood was shed instead of ours ;
Thy soul our guilt did bear ;
Thou took'st our sins, gav'st us thyself ;
Thy love's beyond compare.

Welcome

Welcome and dear unto my soul
Is thy most holy day :
May I th' eternal sabbath keep
With God my strength and stay !

I come, I wait, I hear, I pray ;
Thy footsteps, Lord, I trace :
I joy to think this is the way
To see my Saviour's face.

These are my preparation-days ;
And when my soul is drest,
These Sabbaths shall deliver me
To mine eternal rest.

P S A L M S.

L ET me with light and truth be blest,
Be these my guides to lead the way,
Till on thy holy hill I rest,
And in thy sacred temple pray.
Then will I there fresh altars raise
To God, who is my only joy ;
And well-tun'd harps with songs of praise
Shall all my grateful hours employ.
Why then cast down my soul, and why
So much oppres'd with anxious care ?
On God, thy God, for aid rely,
Who will thy ruin'd state repair.

HAVE

H AVE mercy, Lord, on me,
As thou wert ever kind;
Let me oppress'd with loads of guilt,
Thy wonted mercy find.

Wash off my foul offence,
And cleanse me from my sin;
For I confess my crimes, and see
How great my guilt has been.

Against thee, Lord, alone,
And only in thy sight
Have I transgress'd, and tho' condemn'd,
Must own thy judgments right.

In guilt each part was form'd
Of all this sinful frame;
In guilt I was conceiv'd, and born
The heir of sin and shame.

Yet thou, whose searching eye
Does inward truth require;
In secret did'st with wisdom's laws
My tender soul inspire.

With hyssop purge me, Lord,
And so I clean shall be:
I shall with snow in whiteness vie,
When purify'd by thee.

Make me to hear with joy
Thy kind forgiving voice:
That so the bones which thou hast broke
May with fresh strength rejoice.

Blot

Blot out my crying sins,
Nor me in anger view,
Create in me a heart that's clean,
An upright mind renew.

Withdraw not thou thy help,
Nor cast me from thy sight,
Nor let thy Holy Spirit take
Its everlasting flight.

The joy thy favour gives
Let me again obtain:
And thy free Spirit's firm support
My fainting soul sustain.

TO bless thy chosen race,
In Mercy, Lord, incline,
And cause the brightness of thy face
On all thy Saints to shine:

That so thy wond'rous ways
May through the world be known;
Whilst distant lands their tribute pay,
And thy salvation own.

Let diff'ring nations join
To celebrate thy fame:
Let all the world, O Lord, combine
To praise thy glorious name.

O let them shout and sing,
With joy and pious mirth,
For thou the righteous Judge and King,
Shalt govern all the earth.

Let diff'ring nations join
To celebrate thy fame,
Let all the world, O Lord, combine
To praise thy glorious name.

Then shall the teeming ground
A large increase disclose ;
And we with plenty shall be crown'd,
Which God, our God, bestows.

Then God upon our land
Shall constant blessings shew'r ;
And all the world in awe shall stand
Of his resistless pow'r.

WITH one consent let all the earth
To God their cheerful voices raise,
Glad homage pay with awful mirth,
And sing before him songs of praise ;
Convinc'd that he is God alone,
From whom both we and all proceed ;
We whom he chuses for his own,
The flock that he vouchsafes to feed.
O enter then his temple gate,
Thence to his courts devoutly press,
And still your grateful hymns repeat,
And still his name with praises bless :
For he's the Lord supremely good,
His mercy is for ever sure ;
His truth which always firmly stood,
To endless ages shall endure.

WITH cheerful notes let all the earth
To heav'n their voices raise,
Let all inspir'd with godly mirth,
Sing solemn hymns of praise.

God's tender mercy knows no bound,
His truth shall ne'er decay :
Then let the willing nations round,
Their grateful tribute pay.

THE Lord himself, the mighty Lord,
Vouchsafes to be my guide :
The Shepherd by whose constant care
My wants are all supplied.

In tender grass he makes me feed,
And gently there repose ;
Then leads me to cool shades, and where
Refreshing water flows.

He does my wand'ring soul reclaim,
And to his endless praise,
Instructs with humble zeal to walk
In his most righteous ways.

I pass the gloomy vale of death,
From fear and danger free ;
For there his aiding rod and staff
Defend and comfort me.

Since God doth thus his wond'rous love
Through all my life extend ;
That life to him I will devote,
And in his temple spend.

DIVINE SONGS.

My good Friend, you are earnestly desired to get the following Divine Songs by heart, and to sing them at home, and in the field, when at your work, and at other times. The Songs you now sing do you no good; but these will make your daily task appear easy, and your life comfortable.

Praise to God for our Redemption.

BLEST be the wisdom and the pow'r,
The justice and the grace,
That join'd in counsel to restore,
And save our ruin'd race.

Our father ate forbidden fruit,
And from his glory fell;
And we his children thus were brought
To death, and near to hell.

Blest be the Lord that sent his Son
To take our flesh and blood;
He for our lives gave up his own,
To make our peace with God.

He honour'd all his Father's laws,
Which we have disobey'd;

D I V I N E S O N G S . 147

He bore our sins upon the cross,
And our full ransom paid.

Behold him rising from the grave ;
Behold him rais'd on high :
He pleads his merit, there to save
Transgressors doom'd to die.

There on a glorious throne he reigns,
And by his pow'r divine,
Redeems us from the slavish chains
Of Satan and of sin.

Thence shall the Lord to judgment come,
And with a sov'reign voice
Shall call, and break up every tomb,
While waking saints rejoice.

O may I then with joy appear
Before the Judge's face,
And with the blest assembly there
Sing his redeeming grace.

The Excellency of the B I B L E .

GReat God, with wonder and with praise
On all thy works I look ;
But still thy wisdom, pow'r, and grace,
Shine brightest in thy Book.

The stars that in their courses roll,
Have much instruction giv'n ;
But thy good word informs my soul
How I may climb to heav'n.

148 DIVINE SONGS.

The fields provide me food, and show
The goodness of the Lord;
But fruits of life and glory grow
In thy most holy word.

Here are my choicest treasures hid,
Here my best comfort lies;
Here my desires are satisfy'd,
And hence my hopes arise.

Lord, make me understand thy law;
Shew what my faults have been;
And from thy gospel let me draw
Pardon for all my sin.

Here would I learn how Christ has dy'd
To save my soul from hell:
Not all the books on earth beside
Such heav'nly wonders tell.

Then let me love my Bible more,
And take a fresh delight
By day to read these wonders o'er,
And meditate by night.

Praise to God for learning to Read.

THE praises of my tongue
I offer to the Lord,
That I was taught, and learnt so young
To read his holy word.

That I am brought to know
The danger I was in,

By

By nature and by practice too,
A wretched Slave to Sin.

That I am led to see
I can do nothing well ;
And whither shall a sinner flee
To save himself from hell ?

Dear Lord, this book of thine
Informs me where to go,
For grace to pardon all my sin,
And make me holy too.

Here I can read, and learn,
How Christ, the Son of God,
Has undertook our great concern ;
Our ransom cost his blood.

And now he reigns above,
He sends his Spirit down
To shew the wonders of his love,
And make his gospel known.

O may that Spirit teach,
And make my heart receive
Those truths which all thy servants preach,
And all thy saints believe.

Then shall I praise the Lord
In a more chearful strain,
That I was taught to read his word,
And have not learnt in vain.

The All-seeing God.

A Lmighty God, thy piercing eye
 Strikes thro' the shades of night,
 And our most secret actions lie
 All open to thy sight.

There's not a sin that we commit,
 Nor wicked word we say,
 But in thy dreadful book 'tis writ,
 Against the judgment-day.

And must the crimes that I have done
 Be read and publish'd there?
 Be all expos'd before the sun,
 While men and angels hear?

Lord, at thy foot ashamed I lie;
 Upward I dare not look;
 Pardon my sins before I die,
 And blot them from thy book.

Remember all the dying pains
 That my Redeemer felt,
 And let his blood wash out my stains,
 And answer for my guilt.

O may I now for ever fear
 T' indulge a sinful thought,
 Since the great God can see and hear,
 And writes down ev'ry fault.

Heaven and Hell.

THREE is beyond the sky
A heav'n of joy and love ;
And holy persons when they die
Go to that world above.

There is a dreadful hell,
And everlasting pains ;
There sinners must with devils dwell
In darknes, fire and chains.

Can such a wretch as I
Escape this cursed end ?
And may I hope whene'er I die
I shall to heav'n ascend ?

Then will I read and pray,
While I have life and breath ;
Lest I should be cut off to-day,
Doom'd to eternal death.

Against Lying.

O'Tis a lovely thing for youth
To walk betimes in wisdom's way ;
To fear a lie, to speak the truth,
That we may trust to all they say.

But liars we can never trust, [true ;
Tho' they should speak the thing that's
And he that does one fault at first,
And lies to hide it, makes it two.

The

152 D I V I N E S O N G S.

The Lord delights in them that speak
The words of truth ; but ev'ry liar
Must have his portion in the lake
That burns with brimstone and with fire :

Then let me always watch my lips,
Lest I be struck to death and hell,
Since God a book of reck'ning keeps
For ev'ry lie that people tell.

*Against Swearing, and Cursing, and
taking God's Name in vain.*

ANGELS, that high in glory dwell,
Adore thy name, Almighty God !
And devils tremble down in hell,
Beneath the terrors of thy rod.

And yet how wicked people dare
Abuse thy dreadful glorious name !
And when they're angry how they swear,
And curse their fellows, and blaspheme !

How will they stand before thy face,
Who treated thee with such disdain,
While thou shalt doom them to the place
Of everlasting fire and pain ?

Then never shall one cooling drop
To quench their burning tongues be giv'n ;
But I will praise thee here, and hope
Thus to employ my tongue in heav'n.

My heart shall be in pain to hear
 Wretches affront the Lord above;
 'Tis that great God whose pow'r I fear;
 That heav'nly Father whom I love.

If my companions grow profane,
 I'll leave their friendship, when I hear
 Such sinners take thy name in vain,
 And learn to curse and learn to swear.

The THIEF.

WHY should I deprive my neighbour
 Of his goods against his will?
 Hands were made for honest labour,
 Not to plunder or to steal.

'Tis a foolish self-deceiving
 By such tricks to hope for gain:
 All that's ever got by thieving
 Turns to sorrow, shame, and pain.

Have not Eve and Adam taught us
 Their sad profit to compute?
 To what dismal state they brought us
 When they stole forbidden fruit?

Oft we see a young beginner
 Practise little pil'ring ways,
 Till grown up a harden'd sinner;
 Then the gallows ends his days.

Theft will not be always hidden,
 Tho' we fancy none can spy:

When

When we take a thing forbidden,
God beholds it with his eye.

Guard my heart, O God of heav'n,
Lest I covet what's not mine:
Lest I steal what is not giv'n,
Guard my heart and hands from sin.

Song for a Nurse.

HUSH! my dear, lie still and slumber,
Holy angels guard thy bed!
Heav'ly blessings without number
Gently falling on thy head.

Sleep, my babe; thy food and raiment,
House and home thy friends provide;
All without thy care or payment,
All thy wants are well supply'd.

How much better thou'rt attended
Than the Son of God could be;
When from heav'n he descended,
And became a child like thee?

Soft and easy is thy cradle:
Coarse and hard thy Saviour lay;
When his birth-place was a stable,
And his softest bed was hay.

Blessed babe! what glorious features,
Spotless fair, divinely bright!
Must he dwell with brutal creatures!
How could angels bear the sight?

Was

Was there nothing but a manger
 Cursed sinners could afford,
 To receive the heavenly stranger !
 Did they thus affront their Lord ?

Soft my child ! I did not chide thee,
 Tho' my song might sound too hard :
 'Tis thy { * mother } sits beside thee,
 And her arms shall be thy guard.

Yet to read the shameful story,
 How the Jews abus'd their King,
 How they serv'd the Lord of glory,
 Makes me angry while I sing.

See the kinder shepherds round him,
 Telling wonders from the sky !
 Where they sought him, there they found
 With his Virgin Mother by. [him,

See the lovely babe a-dressing ;
 Lovely infant, how he smil'd !
 When he wept, the mother's blessing
 Sooth'd and hush'd the holy child.

Lo, he slumbers in his manger,
 Where the horned oxen fed ;
 Peace, my darling, here's no danger,
 Here's no ox a-near thy bed.

* Here you may use the words, *brother, sister, neighbour, friend, &c.*

'Twas

156 DIVINE SONGS, &c.

'Twas to save thee, child, from dying,
Save my dear from burning flame,
Bitter groans, and endless crying,
That thy blest Redeemer came.

May'st thou live to know and fear Him,
Trust and love Him all thy days ;
Then go dwell for ever near Him,
See his face, and sing his praise !

I could give thee thousand kisses,
Hoping what I most desire :
Not a mother's fondest wishes
Can to greater joys aspire.

GRACE BEFORE OUR MEALS.

O God, who givest proper food to all thy people, bless these good things to our use, and ourselves to Thy service, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

GRACE AFTER MEALS.

Make us truly thankful, O Lord, for our daily food, and for all Thy other mercies which we receive: And help us to love and serve Thee, the Giver of every thing that is good, for Jesus Christ his sake.
Amen.

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